

THE Atlantic



MARCH 2004

Dispatches from the **NANNY WARS**

**HOW SERFDOM SAVED
THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT
BY CAITLIN FLANAGAN**

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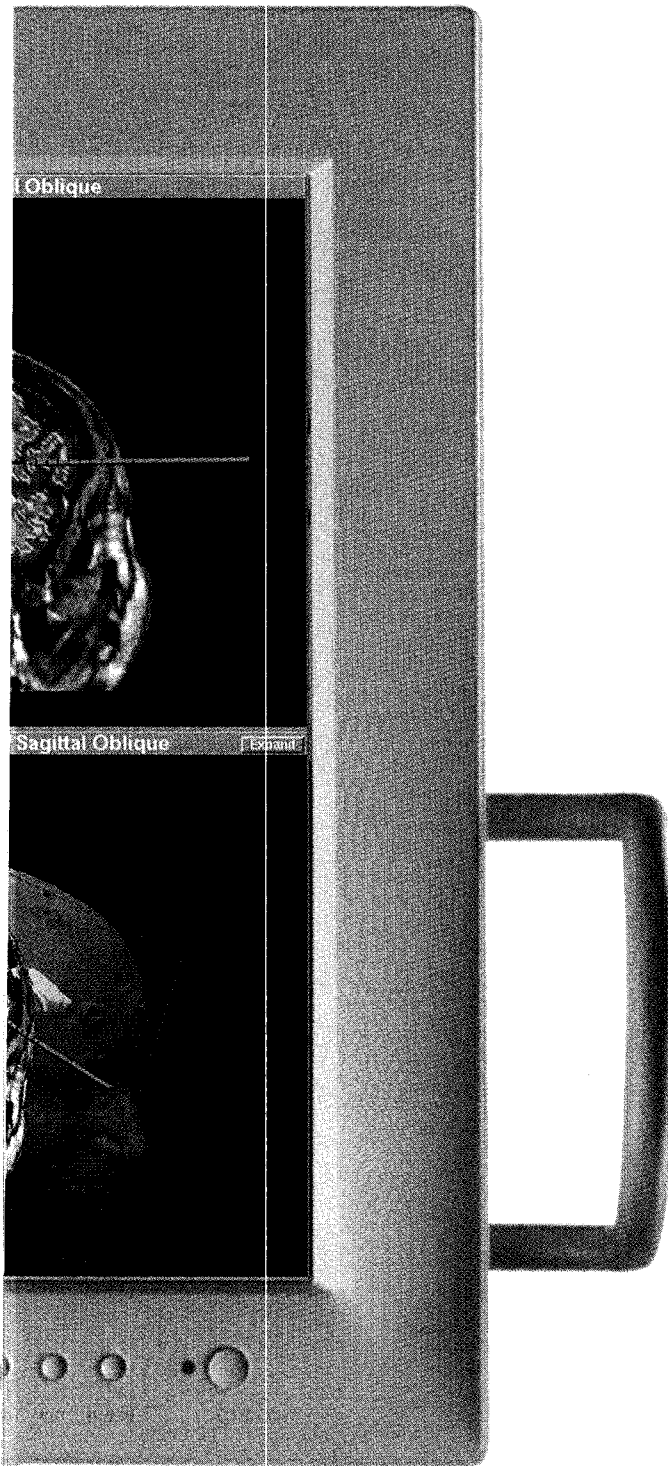




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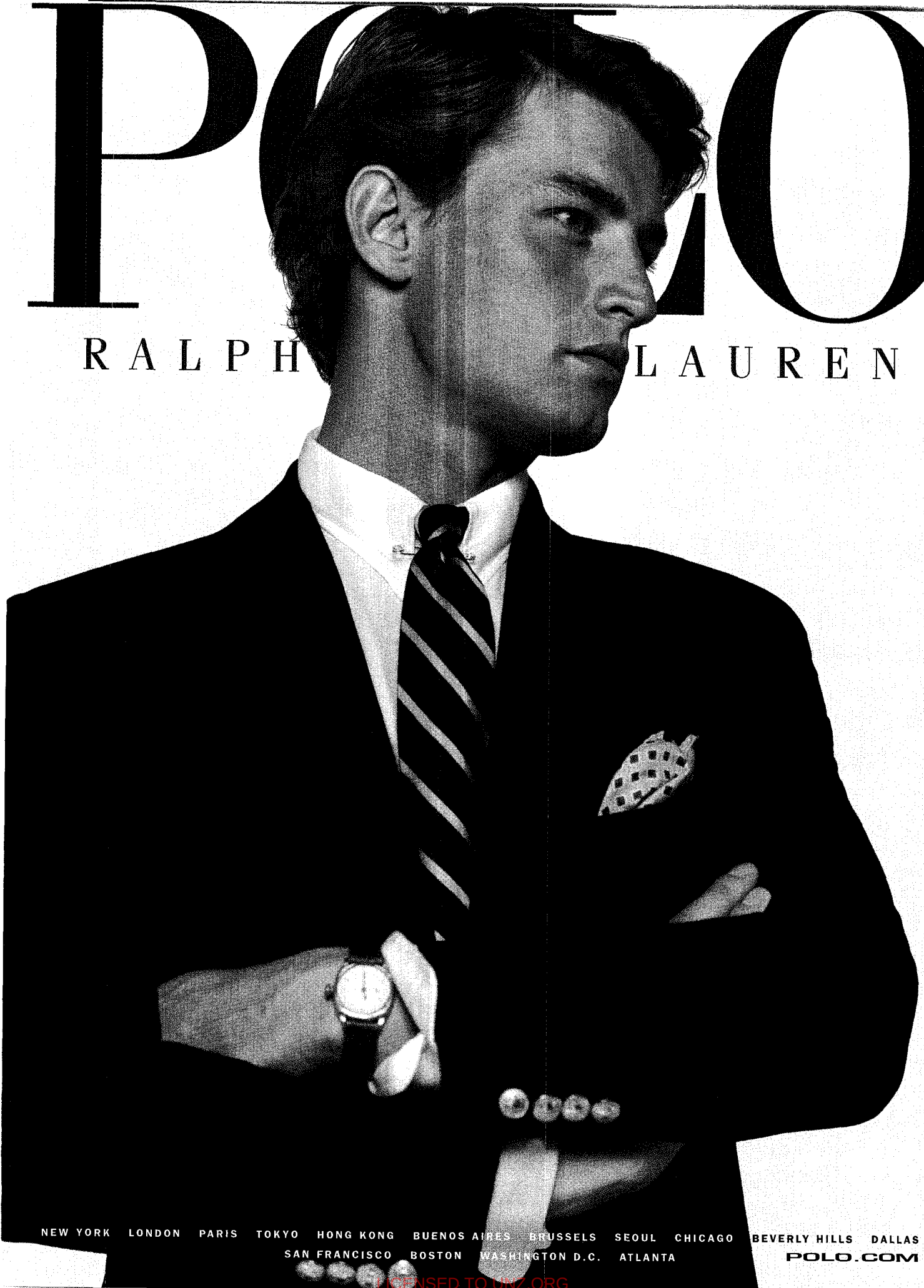


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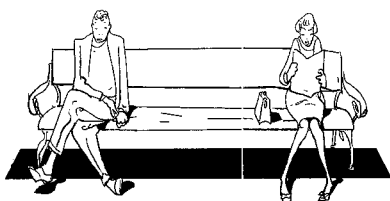
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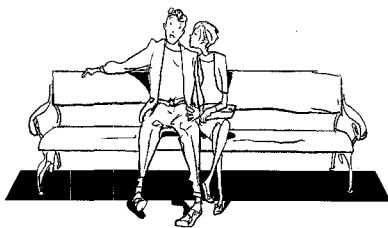
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

John Kerry

In "Tour of Duty" (December *Atlantic*), Douglas Brinkley refers to Vietnam's past "invaders," and includes among them the people that William Lederer and Eugene Burdick called "Ugly Americans" in their 1958 book. The clear implication is that "the ugly American" is the "bad guy," representing U.S. ethnocentrism and inappropriate interference in the internal affairs of Vietnam. Indeed, the epithet is often used in a negative way, and the reference is always to this book by Lederer and Burdick.

The phrase is not, however, used this way in the book. *The Ugly American* is indeed about U.S. interference in the fictional Southeast Asian country of Sarkhan (read Vietnam), and most of the Americans are seen as a bunch of arrogant and ethnocentric bureaucrats who deal with top officials and recommend inappropriate development projects that do not meet the needs of average Sarkhanians. These Americans and their Sarkhanian counterparts are portrayed as the "suits"—prettified officials who never take the trouble to talk to the peasants.

Chapter 17 introduces another sort of American—an economic-assistance engineer named Homer Atkins, who lives among the common people and gets to know their lifestyle and needs. Rather than "building dams and military roads," as proposed by the American government, Atkins finds that what is most needed is a simple water pump that can be powered by bicycles. He sets out to build this in the countryside, and takes on a Sarkhanese as his partner. So Atkins is the hero, not the villain, of Lederer and Burdick's book. He is called "the ugly American" because he is physically ugly; his partner is "the ugly Sarkhanese" for the same reason. Despite their physical ugliness, these two

are morally beautiful, because they work for the people, helping to develop a needed product and to build an indigenous industry at an appropriate level of technology. In contrast, the "suits" in the capital city are physically attractive but, presumably, morally ugly.

Gerald Zeitz
Merion Station, Pa.

I was struck by the ending of Douglas Brinkley's piece on John Kerry's Vietnam combat experience, a passage that was apparently taken from Kerry's war diary. Having jumped into a ditch with the mutilated body of a comrade, and with AK-47 bullets whizzing over his head, Kerry recorded the following dissociative episode:

I just lay in the ditch, not firing because I wanted to save ammo and because I couldn't see what I was firing at and I thought about what was happening in New York at that very moment and if people really felt that I was doing something worthwhile while they went down to Schrafft's and had another ice cream sundae or while some fat little old man who made another million in the past months off defense contracts was charging another \$100 call girl to his expense account. And then, when the shooting stopped, I came back to where I was.

To anyone who grew up reading Hemingway and Fitzgerald, the style and sense of the passage is familiar, especially the references to Schrafft's ice-cream sundaes and fat little old defense contractors with their expense-account "call girls"—images that sound about right for 1920 or 1935, but to my ears are very dated if ostensibly reflecting the thoughts of a young American under fire circa 1969.

Which is not to say the account is not perfectly true. I've heard a story about an intoxicated reporter who got thrown in jail and, feeling that some

dramatic response was called for, removed one shoe and pounded it against the bars of his cell, only later realizing that he had borrowed the scene wholesale from a gangster movie.

However, there is no apparent irony in Kerry's story, and since Hemingway himself was big on bullshit detection, I can't help wondering if an American soldier in 1969 in a Vietnamese ditch under AK-47 fire would truly ponder New Yorkers eating Schrafft's ice-cream sundaes and fat little old defense contractors charging their expense accounts for call girls. Having never been in combat, I have no basis for judging, but it would be most edifying to learn if the passage rings true according to the bullshit detectors of other combat veterans.

Thomas Martin Pflaum
Micanopy, Fla.

According to an excerpt from John Kerry's war diary, when pinned down by enemy fire, Kerry wondered about fat-cat war profiteers who charge call girls' fees to the cost of war materiel. Ordinary combat officers, when pinned down by enemy fire, tighten their sphincters and wonder 1) How the hell am I going to get out of this? and 2) What's the best thing I can do *now* for my men and my mission?

One wonders what Lieutenant Kerry's men wondered while he wondered about higher matters.

Joseph R. Owen
*First Lieutenant, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)
Skaneateles, N.Y.*

I have just finished reading Douglas Brinkley's article "Tour of Duty." I must say I was profoundly moved by Senator John Kerry's sharing of his experiences in Vietnam. Such sharing invites a question: Should Senator Kerry be fortunate enough to win the Demo-

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cratic nomination, and as a consequence rise to the presidency of the United States, could he in good conscience commit U.S. soldiers to a conflict like the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq? Could he as President, having experienced as a combatant the deception involved in sending troops to Vietnam, involve soldiers in the same way that Presidents who have zealously avoided any military service have done?

*Arthur E. Ammeter
Petersfield, Manitoba*

Despite his revulsion for the carnage and his disillusionment with the leadership, John Kerry apparently performed his duties in the Mekong Delta extraordinarily well. Douglas Brinkley clearly makes this point in the excerpts from Kerry's writings that appear in "Tour of Duty." I'm not politically aligned with John Kerry, but he deserves my respect and great credit for fulfilling the responsibility for which he volunteered in the face of such personal anguish and doubt. The natural consequence for Kerry was that the experience propelled him into antiwar activism and possibly energized his political career. The Vietnam War engendered similar personal conflict for many of its participants, including me, and each had its own unique outcome. But Kerry's story is especially important for what it reveals about him as a candidate for President and what he might do about our ongoing war in Iraq.

I spent May of 1968 through May of 1969 in the Mekong Delta as a member of the 9th Infantry Division and the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF). I arrived there as a well-trained, career-minded Infantry Airborne Ranger first lieutenant. My service began with a stint as an infantry platoon leader, and I next served as a liaison officer in the MRF's tactical-operations center aboard the flotilla's flagship, the *Benewah*.

I had experiences very similar to those described by Kerry. His description of being helplessly mired in the hip-deep mud of one of those delta canal banks, with people shooting at him, made me shudder once again from the memory of the absolute vulnerability of the situation. And I empathize with his dismay over the leadership.

In the end, "Vietnamization" was the doomed-from-conception charade created to extract us from a politically untenable situation. It certainly made me change my tactics. I gave the welfare of my men paramount consideration, over missions that held no value given our stated abandonment of military victory as a goal.

Unlike Kerry, most people with similar experience moved on to careers not directly inspired by war. But I think we have all drawn from the lessons of that war in the conduct of our daily lives, and will continue to do so.

*Irving M. Cohen
Del Mar, Calif.*

Forgotten Millions

The provocatively titled "The Forgotten Millions," by Jonathan Rauch (December *Atlantic*), raises and unfortunately mishandles a significant historical issue. Rauch is correct in drawing our attention to the intolerable silence surrounding the butchery perpetrated under the banner of the Soviet Union, but he errs in narrowly condemning communism.

Communism is a system of economic and social organization—nothing more, nothing less. What is really at issue is the political structure on which Soviet communism was erected: totalitarian dictatorship, which legitimized arbitrary brutality and flouted the rule of law.

It is important not to confuse communism, capitalism, or any other ism with the political system in which it is embedded. Following Rauch's model, we may equally denigrate corporatist capitalism for the deeds of the Third Reich, or liberal capitalism for the millions killed by the murderous dictatorships propped up by the United States throughout the Cold War.

Rauch, quoting Anne Applebaum, dourly notes that "in December of 2001 ... 'thirteen of the fifteen former Soviet republics were run by former communists.'" Many of these leaders undoubtedly committed grave crimes against citizens of the Soviet Union. But a historical account that focused on their specific deeds, and on the nature of the political machine that enabled

their crimes to take place, would have a rather more salutary effect than an unthinking broadside against a now defunct ideology.

*Ben A. Oppenheim
Sherman Oaks, Calif.*

In "The Forgotten Millions," Jonathan Rauch ushers us back to the McCarthy era. He conflates anti-war demonstrators with sponsors of the march, and consequently finds the marchers guilty by association of all the horrors of communism. This is a monstrous libel, for which Rauch should be deeply ashamed.

The marchers demonstrated not in favor of communism but against a war they considered unnecessary and evil. We all know now that no weapons of mass destruction have been found, and that Iraq was not an immediate threat to the United States. In fact, this disastrous misadventure has seriously endangered both the United States and the rest of the world.

Millions of people suffered and died under communism, but millions of people also suffered and died under Christianity. I doubt that Rauch would condemn all those who go to mass on Sundays as being responsible for all the sins committed in the name of Christianity.

Rauch says that the marchers and the writers who supported them should be ashamed. They have no reason to feel shame. They should be thanked for the courage, honor, and integrity with which they opposed the war in the face of a warmongering President and the congressional cowards who supported his actions. Jonathan Rauch, however, has fallen into an intellectual darkness that he shares with Joseph McCarthy. To atone for his shameful accusations he should apologize to the marchers and the writers who supported them.

*Neil Mackenzie
San Francisco, Calif.*

Jonathan Rauch's support of efforts to commemorate the atrocities of communism makes sense, but his criticism of those who marched in demonstrations sponsored by International ANSWER is premised on a bad analogy. He asserts that showing up at these



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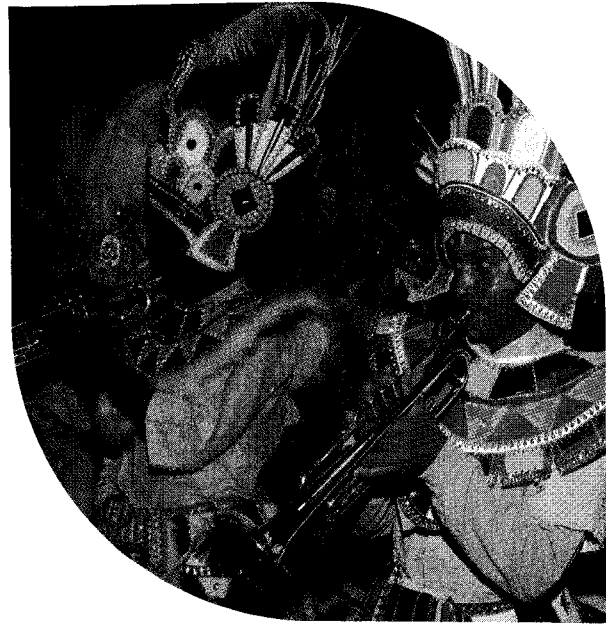
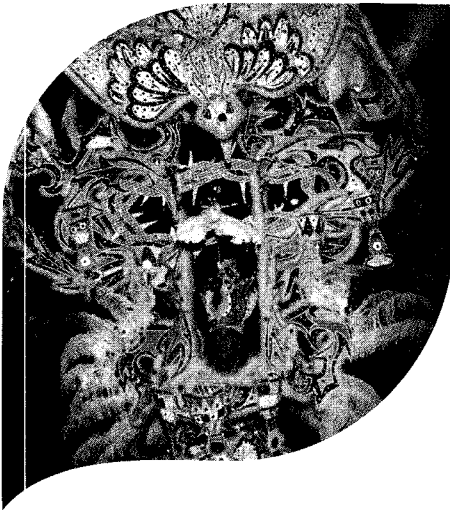
Christine has been described
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rallies was analogous to attending one sponsored by the KKK or the American Nazi Party: those present lent tacit support to ANSWER. The problem with this half-baked analogy is twofold. First, whereas everyone is familiar with the ideology of the KKK and the Nazis, most people don't have a clue as to who ANSWER is. The anti-war movement was clearly much bigger than ANSWER, and it was to protest the war that people marched. Second, there is no necessary connection between opposition to the war and communism. By Rauch's logic, showing up at a fundraiser for eradicating AIDS in Africa would be wrong if it were sponsored by ANSWER. No "self-respecting American intellectual" would call it a worthy event.

No matter how perniciously the Communists implemented their vision of the world, communist ideology—unlike racism—is intensely humanistic and premised on helping those oppressed by society.

*John Campbell-Orde
Chattanooga, Tenn.*

Jonathan Rauch summarizes the twisted paradox of the West's attitudes to left- and right-wing totalitarianism well. Our intellectual and media elites do indeed have a soft spot for the tyrants of the left, for which I would like to venture what may be at least a partial explanation.

Communism, like Nazism, offers a utopian millennial creed that appeals to a certain type of individual found in any segment of society—the sort Eric Hoffer dubbed the "true believer." Nazi dogma, however, is more limited in its potential appeal, being focused on those of a particular ethnic caste. Thus it is not nearly as effective a sucker magnet as communism, which has always had a larger retinue of useful idiots.

*Julius Wroblewski
Vancouver, B.C.*

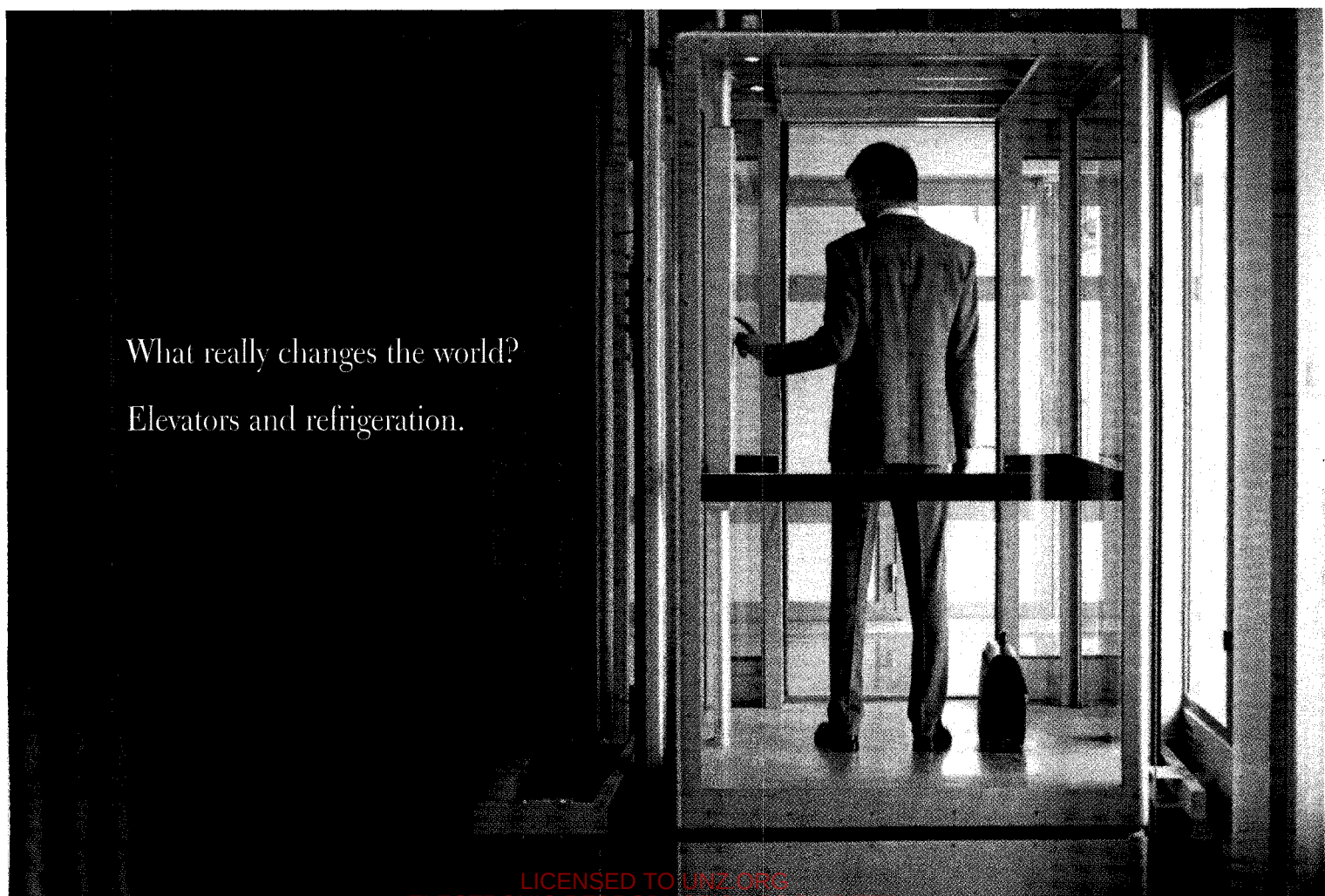
Jonathan Rauch excoriates those on the left as communism's apologists. He equates communism with other ideologies that are denounced by the left and thereby tries to highlight what he perceives as an inconsistency.

Unlike Nazism, the communist ideal had nothing whatsoever to do with the suppression or extermination of individuals based on their differences from the "believers." Communism is a perfect system for perfectly equal individuals, whereas other isms are perfect systems for perfectly unequal individuals. True, the prosecution of the communist ideal led to incredible suppression of individuals; but the evils of communism were in the prosecution, not in the ideal.

Those "apologists" recognize the difference between an evil ideology and unavoidable human evils. We do not generally relegate capitalism to the shelf of unspeakable evils whenever human trafficking or sweatshops are unearthed. We instinctively make a distinction between the shortcomings of human beings and those of ideologies. Perhaps we can condemn communism as completely incompatible with human nature, but we cannot condemn it to the same category as Nazism.

*Stella Park
Cambridge, Mass.*

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Jonathan Rauch is correct to point out that Nazism was not the only deadly ideology manifested in the twentieth century, but he finds specious fault in communism. Stalin's regime did cause millions of tragic, unjustifiable deaths, but the ism Rauch ought to blame is totalitarianism. Stalin never practiced anything that could seriously be called communism; nor did anyone else in Russia from 1917 to 1989.

Whether it claims the mantle of the right or of the left, any system of governance that allows absolute power to fall into the hands of one corrupt person or party will have disastrous results.

Kristy McElroy
San Francisco, Calif.

The attempt to put Communists on the same moral level as Nazis simply doesn't fly. Whereas there was only one Nazi Party and one top Nazi, Adolf Hitler, we have encountered many kinds of communism, and many top Communists. In the good and the evil that they did, and in how history judges them, they

vary. Joseph Stalin was not the same as Mao, and Mao was not the same as Ho Chi Minh. Fidel Castro is not the same as Kim Jong Il. For that matter, Lee Kwan Yew, the authoritarian leader emeritus of Singapore, is not necessarily morally better than Tran Duc Luong, the current President of Vietnam. Whether one categorizes them as rightists or leftists, capitalists or communists, there are many kinds of authoritarian leaders and governments, and morally they range from one end of the spectrum to the other.

Alex Marshall
New York, N.Y.

Jonathan Rauch accuses Americans of condemning the crimes of the Nazis, with their "six million" victims, but accepting with hardly a murmur the "scores and scores of millions" of victims of communism. He ignores fundamental facts about the past century, however, and thus distorts reality.

1. In their twelve years in power, including six years of World War II, German fascists were responsible for

the deaths of at least 40 million people, beginning with Communists and other Germans who were deemed unworthy of living. During the war years alone the Nazis' victims included some six million Poles, three million non-Polish Jews, two million southern Slavs, and 25 million Soviet subjects, along with four million Germans. Most of the wartime dead were civilian noncombatants.

2. Whatever communism's murderousness (and in *Koba the Dread*, Martin Amis suggests that 20 million were killed by the Soviet regime), the primary reason the fascists did not win World War II was the effectiveness of Stalin's Red Army as an ally of the United States and Britain.

3. Like it or not, therefore, our post-World War II freedom and prosperity in the West are in part a result of the successes of communism. This is not to excuse the wrongs of communism, or to wish for its return, but we must remember our debt to this failed experiment.

Michael Zirinsky
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho

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American Supremacy

George Soros, in "The Bubble of American Supremacy" (December *Atlantic*), makes some good points, but presents a false choice of two options—ruling out the middle way. The Bush Administration was entirely correct in declaring war on terrorism, specifically on al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The effort to unseat the Taliban government in Afghanistan was entirely legitimate and supported by specific UN resolutions and by the world community at large, including Islamic nations. The mistake the U.S. government made lies in its decision to move on to Iraq before the job of rebuilding Afghanistan was off the ground and gaining momentum. By ignoring the justified war in Afghanistan and the lack of follow-up there, and by harping on the current situation in Iraq, Soros falls into the same trap that the media find themselves in—undercutting his own arguments. There could have been no better showcase for winning the hearts and minds of the

world's people, especially in Islamic countries, than Afghanistan. There the Bush Administration missed a great opportunity to solidify American supremacy in the world, more so than it did by invading Iraq.

*Naras Eechambadi
Charlotte, N.C.*

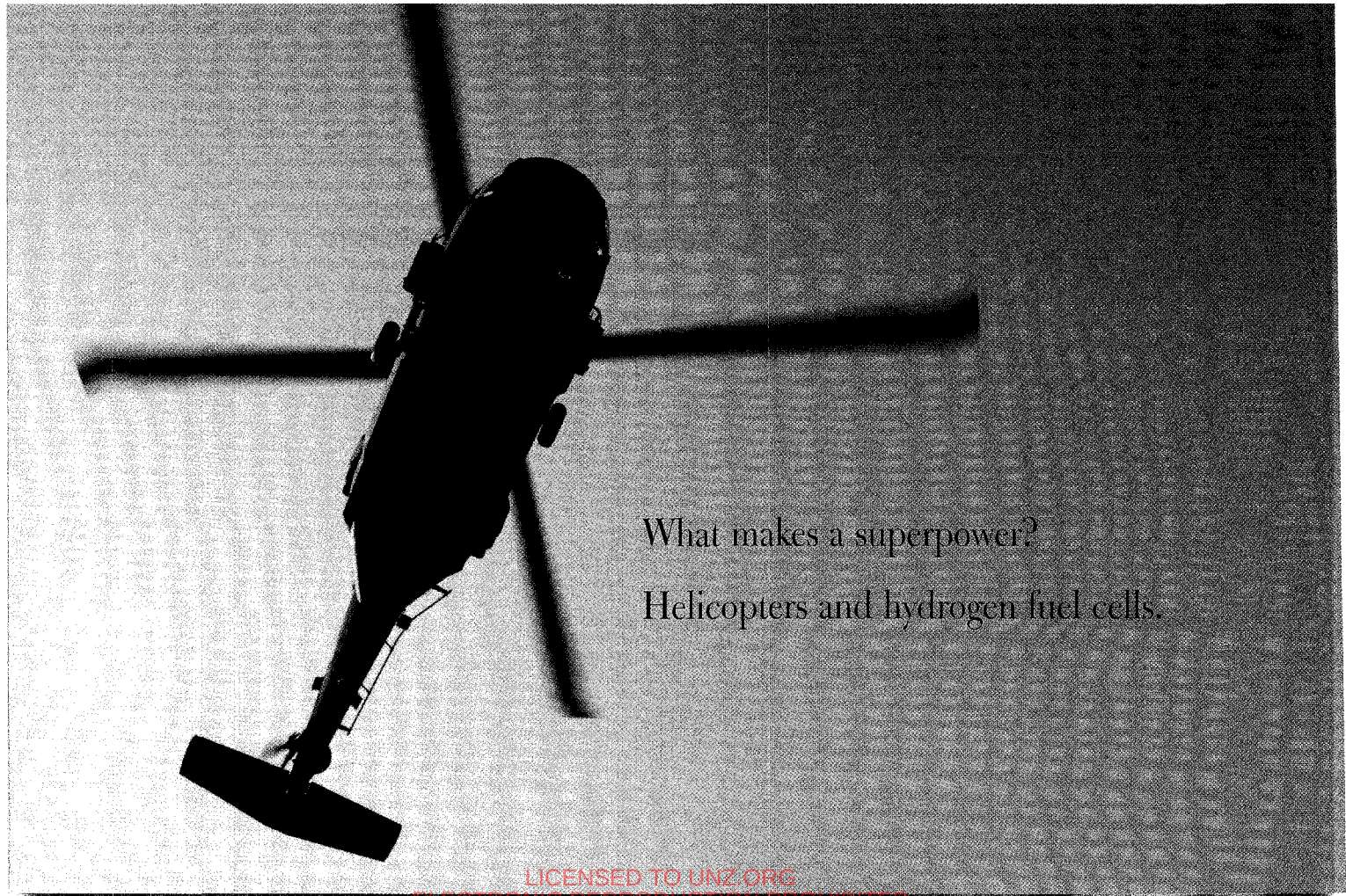
George Soros disapproves of the pre-emptive military policy of President Bush. He thinks that the terrorist attacks on the United States should have been treated like a crime and taken care of by the police. He feels that the United States should "lead a cooperative effort to improve the world by engaging in preventive actions of a constructive character." Soros is as wrong as he can be. He ignores the fact that the Islamic terror is led by a multibillionaire, and that all the 9/11 suicide bombers belonged to the middle class or higher. No "constructive" actions to improve conditions in the world would have made any difference. Al-Qaeda is fighting against all unbelievers and especially against

the secular state, of which the United States is a prime example.

The only way to fight these terrorists is by military means. If President Clinton, after the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Africa, had invaded Afghanistan, removed the Taliban dictatorship, and destroyed the al-Qaeda training camps, 9/11 might very well have been prevented.

*Jacob Amir
Santa Fe, N.M.*

George Soros says that "freedom, democracy, and free enterprise" is not the only sustainable model for national success. Yet the other models that come to mind (for example, totalitarianism, socialism, and communism) have not succeeded. He says that America's success with the "freedom, democracy, and free enterprise" model depends on its dominant position at the center of the global capital system, and this position is not available to others. Yet the peoples of China, Japan, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland, Taiwan, and Korea (to name a



What makes a superpower?

Helicopters and hydrogen fuel cells.

few) have all used the free-enterprise system to better their lives.

Soros says that by invading Iraq, the United States ignored the first principle of an open society: the right to self-determination. Yet the people of Iraq under Saddam Hussein were obviously not enjoying self-determination. He says that U.S. action is making terrorism worse. Yet it's not clear that more-passive alternatives (allowing religious radicals to take control of governments, for example) would be better. He says that the United States is imposing its values and interests on the world. Yet that is precisely what it did during and after World War II.

*David P. Hariton
New York, N.Y.*

George Soros objects to America's flexing its muscle in Iraq and the world, as the Bush Administration is bent on doing. A foreign policy based on the notion that power trumps law, he points out, is no better than "a crude form of social Darwinism": "It ignores the role of

cooperation in the survival of the fittest, and puts all the emphasis on competition." That's bad, I agree. Down the road it could well lead to an abrupt reversal of fortune for us, so I, too, support "replacing the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive military action with preventive action of a constructive and affirmative nature."

But what Soros does not tell us is exactly how international "collective action," led by a newly humble United States, could answer his key questions: "How to deal with failed states and oppressive, corrupt, and inept regimes? How to get rid of the likes of Saddam?" If war is not the way to get rid of the genocidal totalitarians of this world, Mr. Soros, then what is? I have a hard time believing that warm-and-fuzzy initiatives such as "increased foreign aid or better and fairer trade rules," though nice, would suffice.

*Eric Stewart
Catonsville, Md.*

George Soros expresses my views toward American foreign policy and its consequences with a forceful-

ness and clarity rarely seen in the American press today. The events of September 11, 2001, provided a singular opportunity for this country to begin a new era of global leadership emphasizing multilateral, cooperative solutions to disparities and violence in the world. This would have involved listening to the leaders of other nations, both the powerful and wealthy and the poor and disenfranchised—because solutions cannot be achieved without the help and cooperation of the former and an understanding of the needs and minds of the latter.

Instead, under the leadership of our present Administration, this nation has taken a course of imposing its will with military action and condemning opposing voices at home and in other countries. By declaring "war on terrorism" and invading and occupying Iraq, we have only increased the intensity of the terrorism we were seeking to reduce.

*William F. Hoffmann
Tucson, Ariz.*

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George Soros replies:

I entirely agree with Naras Eechambadi that the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan was justified and that our failure to follow up is a missed opportunity. To Jacob Amir and David Hariton, I say that although constructive action would not rid the world of terrorists, it would deprive them of popular support. To wage military action you need to know where your target lives. Attacking the wrong targets generates resentment, as we have found in Iraq. The majority of people in Iraq now favor a more open society; and the majority in Iraq resent the United States as an occupying power. We are promoting the values of open society the wrong way. To Eric Stewart, I would like to point out that I address in detail what a constructive vision would entail in the second part of the book from which the essay was excerpted.

College Admissions

Your first annual "College Admissions Survey" (November *Atlantic*) is a complete success. Thank you.

I have two comments, however, about Jay Mathews's contribution, "The Bias Question." Mathews writes that the College Board has now eliminated questions on "subjects beyond the experience of a typical inner-city student, such as yachting or debutante balls." Now, really, were there ever such questions? Can Mathews cite a year in which students were asked about these matters? I understand what he is getting at, but "such as" implies that these two examples are paradigm cases of the kind of unfairness that is in question. I'm skeptical.

The thrust of Roy Freedle's argument, on which Mathews relies heavily, is that if the College Board would only add Freedle's R-SAT to its own SAT, a result would be achieved that more honestly reflected the abilities of minority students. Perhaps. And the point of that? According to Mathews and Freedle, it would allow minority students to get into much more selective colleges. Is that good? The essence of Nicholas Confessore's and Don Peck's articles is that selectivity is an illusion. Peck points out that according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the choice of college makes little difference to students of similar background and aptitude

in terms of their later earnings. Confessore emphasizes that "a school's selectivity does not necessarily reflect the quality of education it offers." Why, then, the fuss? Let us also keep in mind that the most selective schools will probably not alter the education they provide to accommodate the newfangled R-SAT scores. As we know, the sociologist Thomas Sowell has made a career out of fighting against affirmative action, and one of his points is that enticing students to go to schools over their heads is demoralizing and, finally, counterproductive.

Sidney Gendin
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Roy Freedle's analysis of racial differences in scores on "easy" and "hard" SAT questions calls to mind a story about Ring Lardner and his *You Know Me, Al*, a collection of letters home from a fictional baseball player. Critics complained that the letters were unrealistic, in that the ballplayer made frequent (and humorous) errors of spelling and grammar, yet always managed to spell the "big" words correctly. Lardner explained that his uneducated writer would be overconfident about ordinary words, and often get them wrong, yet would know enough to look up the hard words in a dictionary.

Paul C. Wessel
McLean, Va.

Jay Mathews replies:

Paul Wessel makes an excellent point, as does Sidney Gendin. My reference to debutantes and yachts was exaggerated for effect, and went too far. It is also true, as the entire group of articles makes clear, that we put too much value on college selectivity; but Freedle's analysis goes further than that. Educators in inner-city and rural schools report that students with academic potential, including many minority students, often fail even to apply to college, in part because they have been led to believe that they don't belong there. A supplemental SAT score that revealed hidden strengths might persuade them to give it a try.

Your special section on college admissions offered excellent insights into the business of education in America. The issues are complex and often

subjective. Yet as the president of one of the smallest colleges in America (one that provides all its enrolled students with full tuition scholarships for one of the nation's finest engineering educations), I often feel like Rodney Dangerfield: "We just can't get no respect!" On page 121 you stated that Princeton has the highest alumni-giving rate of any college in the country, at 64 percent. Please note that the Webb Institute, which has been operating since 1889, had 68 percent participation last year. (The *U.S. News* data bank will confirm this.) I am proud of our alumni support, which enables Webb to offer these scholarships. I hope you will give our alumni the recognition they so richly deserve for their superb generosity. They epitomize the spirit of philanthropy we should all strive for!

Ronald K. Kiss
President, Webb Institute
Glen Cove, N.Y.

I was happy to learn about the National Survey of Student Engagement ("What Makes a College Good?" November *Atlantic*), but disappointed that its results are not made accessible to the public. I could have used student opinion when I applied to New York University, in 1997. It would have been useful to know specific information about my programs and resources.

Although NYU has good rankings in most college guides, my experience suggests that the quality of education doesn't always match those rankings. For example, when I took a video-art class for art majors, the media lab was located not in the art department but in the music department, and our teacher was not allowed to come into the lab to teach the students. Instead we were helped by undertrained student aides, who sometimes erased entire projects by mistake.

One of the best classes I've taken was a journalism class in which the students were tested daily on their knowledge of *The New York Times*. This was taught by a first-time adjunct professor. One of the worst classes I've taken was also in the journalism department: the professor—full-time—periodically showed up a half hour late to class, leaving his teaching assistant to entertain us.

Finally, despite a six percent tuition increase for the 2003–2004 academic year, computer labs have drastically cut down on their hours of operation, and are usually understaffed.

All these are concrete examples of Nicholas Confessore's point about college rankings. Universities, particularly at competitive levels, tend to rely on external features like SAT scores and endowment funds for their reputations rather than on the internal reality of overall education quality.

We need more firsthand accounts to be available—to high school seniors at the beginning of the application process, and to college students looking for good professors for their next term. High school students must rely on name-brand recognition and impersonal data, and college students must rely on word-of-mouth accounts of professors. Sometimes even those are not available. My journalism class with the tardy professor was a waste of thousands of dollars that could have been spent on a class with a competent teacher.

Favoring data over student opinion can also lead applicants to overlook a school's good qualities. A potential applicant to NYU would have trouble getting study-abroad information from *The Princeton Review*, yet the program is one of the stellar features of the university. A student considering a studio-art major would do well to know that the art advisers are on a first-name basis with all the students, and that they are easily accessible.

Confessore suggests that the best way for potential applicants to find out these quality-of-education details is to visit schools and ask questions of tour guides and admissions officers. I think this is unrealistic, however, because not all applicants visit campuses, and those who do have little one-on-one time with admissions officers. Instead I would like to see a growing market of books and Web sites that use student opinion and anecdotes as their material. And perhaps one day the NSSE will have authority over SAT scores and endowment funds.

*Carol L. Maskus
New York, N.Y.*

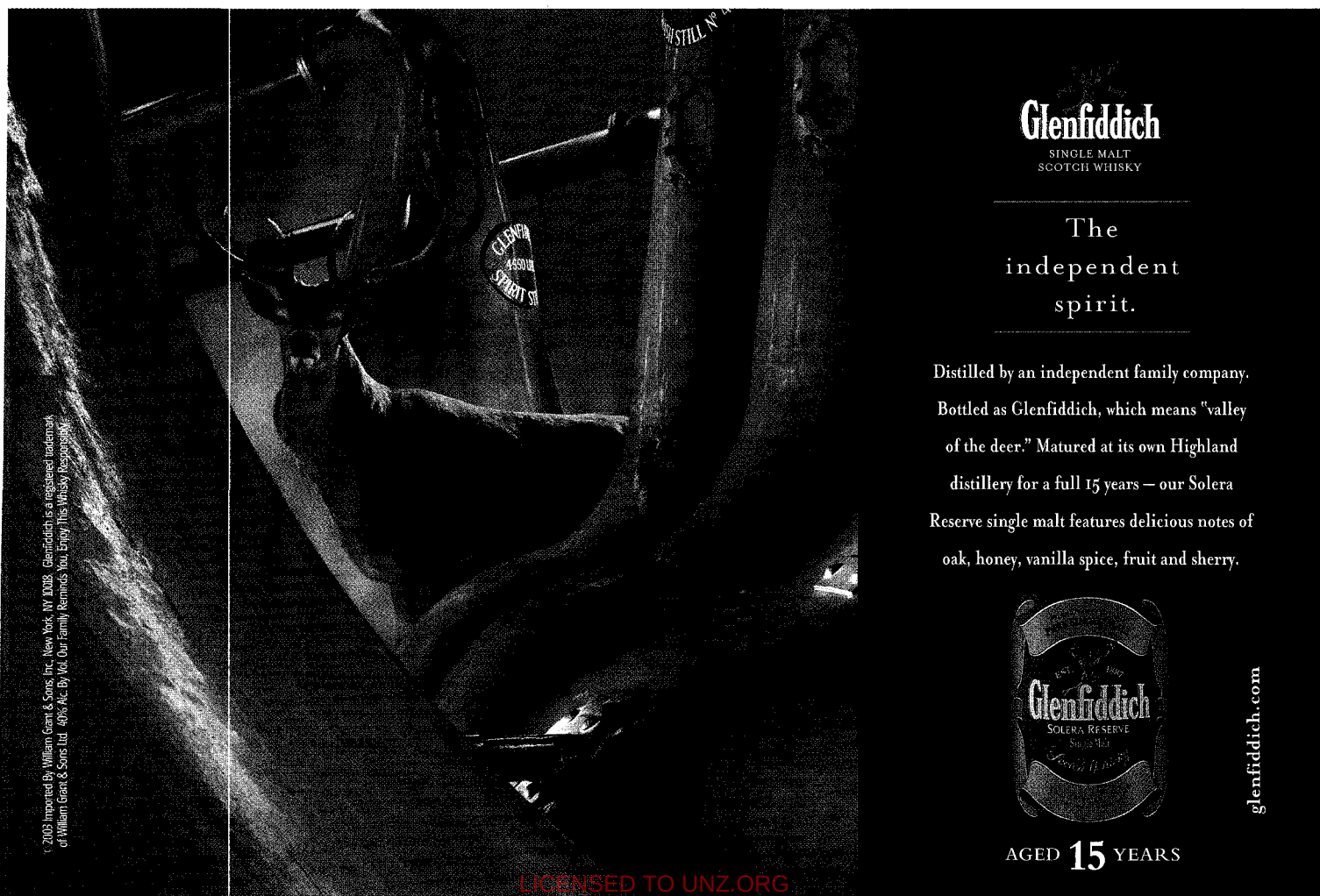
How to Kill a Country

Regarding Samantha Power's article "How to Kill a Country" (*December Atlantic*): The claim that Ian Smith, the former Prime Minister of white Rhodesia, "shared Rhodes's belief that black majority rule would occur 'never in a thousand years'" implies that it was Rhodes who made this foolish prediction. It was, of course, Smith.

Smith never "ran an election campaign promising 'a whiter, brighter Rhodesia,'" and I defy Power to provide evidence to the contrary.

Power calls Zimbabwe "as broken as any country on the planet" and says that today it is "the continent's basket case." How, I wonder, would she describe the Congo, or Sudan, or Somalia?

Zimbabwe was never "the breadbasket of Africa"; the UN World Food Programme never "relied on Zimbabwean agriculture to help keep the rest of Africa fed," and I challenge Power to provide the statistics to back her claim. And by the way, how does she square it with her



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assertion that “the West’s farm subsidies are ravaging African agriculture”? Both cannot be true.

The falloff in Zimbabwe’s agricultural production is indeed “staggering”—but part of the reason is a severe regional drought that Power fails to mention.

White farmers do indeed say that “land reform was both necessary and inevitable.” What the writer fails to explain is why it took them so long to recognize this fact.

Power writes, “The Nazis gave us the Final Solution, the Serbs gave us ‘ethnic cleansing’; the Zimbabweans have given us ‘wiping away.’” Killing 15,000 or 25,000 people is unforgivable (by the way, the Ndebele make up a bit less than a fifth of Zimbabwe’s population, not “about a fourth”), even when put in the context—something Power fails to do—of a campaign by anti-government dissidents in which more than twenty commercial farmers were killed. But to call this outrage “genocide” devalues the word.

Michael Holman
Africa editor, Financial Times
(1984–2002)
London, England

Samantha Power’s otherwise excellent essay attempts to paint both Ian Smith and Robert Mugabe with the same brush of totalitarianism. But no one starved in Rhodesia when Smith was in office there. Government-policy-induced starvation began and continues on Mugabe’s watch.

David Livingston
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Samantha Power replies:

It was Ian Smith who infamously proclaimed “never in a thousand years,” but Cecil Rhodes would certainly have shared the belief. Rhodes argued that it was the duty of the white race, “the finest race,” to occupy Africa, and to impose a system of “despotism on the barbarians.” “The more of the world we inhabit,” Rhodes said, “the better it is for the human race.”

According to newspaper reports of the time, Ian Smith did indeed make reference to a “whiter, brighter Rhodesia” during the campaign for the 1965 parliamentary elections, while appealing to voters at a meeting in Melfort, about twenty-five miles east of Harare.

Southern Africa has indeed suffered a regional drought, but Zimbabwe’s neighbors, which did not launch land-seizure programs, have not endured a comparable dropoff in agricultural production and living conditions. Michael Holman must certainly agree that farms are far less likely to be able to withstand adverse weather conditions when their new occupants stop planting seeds and harvesting crops, and when they sell irrigation equipment and sprinkler systems for hard cash. With the demise of so much large-scale farming, even a normal rainy season would have yielded a staggering dropoff. It is World Food Programme officials in Harare (who ought to know) who describe their function as shifting almost overnight in February of 2002 from procurement to widespread in-country distribution. I agree with Mr. Holman that the white farmers’ after-the-fact consensus about the necessity of land reform did not yield meaningful concessions while they were still in possession of their land.

Certainly Zimbabwe is “broken” in a fashion different from that of the Congo, Sudan, and Somalia. But it is an extraordinary indictment of Mugabe’s leadership that a country untouched by war at home is suffering under conditions that rival those of its war-ravaged neighbors. In slaughtering the Ndebele (whose population numbers vary by source and will be unknowable absent a reliable census), Mugabe did not set out to exterminate every last member of the minority. But his massacres did meet the UN’s legal definition of “genocide”: a systematic attempt to “destroy in whole, or in part,” a national, ethnic, or religious group as such. While leader of Rhodesia, Ian Smith may not have starved his people, but in denying the black majority dignity, freedom, and the equal right to own land, he violated human rights, stunted the country’s development, and contributed indirectly to Mugabe’s rise.

Defender of the Faith

Thank you for Philip Jenkins’s clear account of the origins of Nigerian Archbishop Akinola’s tough anti-gay stance (“Defender of the Faith,” November *Atlantic*). As Jenkins reports, the Anglican Church of Nigeria finds itself in competition with Islam and believes that in order to win converts, it must denounce homosexuality as vehemently as its rivals do.

Akinola has thus entered the Anglican Church of Nigeria in a dangerous contest: the prize—the greatest number of converts—goes to the group that demonizes gay women and men with the most vigor and fury. Tragically, such evangelism will perpetuate violence against gay people and those perceived as gay. It will produce a generation of gay Christians full of internalized self-loathing and a generation of gay skeptics resistant to a faith that they find irrational and hateful.

Christian religious leaders like Akinola, who denounce their gay brothers and sisters, will perhaps comfort themselves that they have stood against those whom they label “decadent and Western.” But will they recognize that they have perverted the Good News into a message of victimization, fear, violence, and hatred?

*Douglas Murray
Nashville, Tenn.*

Philip Jenkins accepts uncritically Nigerian Archbishop Peter Akinola's way of framing the issues concerning homosexuality and the Anglican Communion. To Akinola and, apparently, Jenkins, at issue is a conflict between traditionalists who base their opposition to the ordination of Bishop Gene Robinson on a strict New Testament faith and those who want to amend the faith with modern, secular values.

For me, the problem is quite the opposite. The essential scriptural message at every level—literal, metaphorical, narrative—is to welcome those whom society calls outcasts, to welcome them as brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus of the Gospels repeatedly expresses scorn for those who preen themselves on compulsively adhering to scriptural minutiae. His stories keep insisting that those scorned by the religious establishment are often the bearers of the deepest (though not always the most comfortable) truths. And history warns again and again that disastrous consequences can follow from misusing biblical authority to legitimize social prejudices—against the sick, the poor, or women; against racial, ethnic, and religious groups; and in support of slavery and oppression.

In short, the archbishop asks me to disobey the Gospels' central messages of love and inclusion on the basis of



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two clearly peripheral New Testament verses out of thousands, neither of them spoken by Jesus.

Perhaps the archbishop is right about what God wants. If he is, however, it is despite rather than because of biblical faith.

*Richard Johnson
Silver Spring, Md.*

It saddens but doesn't surprise me that the Anglican Primate of Nigeria is intensely Bible-centered. Like many Christians, he values the rest of the Bible above what the Gospels tell us of Jesus. If one reads the Gospels, it should be obvious that Jesus was not concerned about homosexuality—or about any kind of sexuality. He hardly mentions anything sexual. Paul's remarks can be interpreted as opposing man-to-man sex, though some linguists have raised doubts even about that.

As for homosexuality among animals, Archbishop Akinola should be given a copy of Bruce Bagemihl's *Biological Exuberance*, which cites thousands of animal species in which homosexual behavior has been observed.

*Laurence G. Wolf
Cincinnati, Ohio*

If Philip Jenkins is correct in his analysis of Peter Akinola's fury at the ordination of gay bishops—that the archbishop is in a battle with Islam over which faith community is the least welcoming to gay and lesbian persons—then Akinola's motives are revealed to be political rather than theological, and anything he has to say regarding God's desires for this world and human relationships is to be dismissed as self-serving manipulation for the preservation of his own political power.

I am an American, an Episcopal priest, and I repudiate everything Peter Akinola has to say regarding who is and who is not fit to be ordained in our Church. I would rather have a Christian church in Africa with only one member, if that member welcomed all God's children equally, than an entire continent covered with Christians who decided who was welcome based on sexual orientation. If that's to be the case, then let Islam have the whole thing.

*The Rev. Dr. Alan C. Miller
Gainesville, Fla.*

Philip Jenkins's article on the homosexuality issue in the Anglican Communion was helpful. As Archbishop Akinola asserts, the real issue is the authority of Holy Scripture. Homosexual behavior is mentioned seven times in the Christian Bible, and always unconditionally condemned.

One does not need to be a conservative to feel concerned about the erosion of the authority of Scripture. If the Church is unwilling to take seriously biblical teachings on human sexuality, how can we expect others to listen to its teachings on peace, justice, and nonviolence? Either the Bible is a relevant guide for modern living or it is an antiquated writing, hardly worthy of consideration.

The homosexuality issue in the Church is not about inclusivity, as many hold. Persons of homosexual orientation (however that is defined) are welcome in the leadership of most churches—but only if they live celibate lives. People cannot help how they are born or conditioned, but we are all nevertheless responsible for our behavior.

*Nancy Regensburger
Vassar, Mich.*

Philip Jenkins replies:

I don't wish to defend Archbishop Akinola's views. My goal was to explain his beliefs and assumptions, and to suggest that they were based on far more than mindless anti-gay prejudice. Having said this, I would take issue with a couple of points in these letters. Whether the churches should ordain openly gay clergy is debatable, but supporters of such a policy should not deny that it constitutes a radical departure from the oldest Christian traditions.

Richard Johnson argues that the core New Testament message demands a welcome for "those whom society calls outcasts" as "brothers and sisters in Christ." He can certainly claim excellent scriptural authority for his views. However, as I read those same passages, Jesus expected that following their welcome, the various outcasts (adulterers, publicans) would give up the sinful practices that made them outcasts in the first place. That is the central issue dividing liberal and conservative Christians on these matters: liberals do not believe that homosexual actions are sinful, conservatives do.

Laurence Wolf observes that Jesus says very little about sexual matters, which might conceivably mean that he regarded rules of sexual conduct as trivial or insignificant. Much more likely, though, is that Jesus simply shared the sexual values of Judaism in his time, and felt no need to reassert doctrines and beliefs that were so self-evident. Supporting this latter view, stringent moral and sexual orthodoxy—indeed, puritanism—permeates the earliest Christian documents, including the New Testament Epistles, the Apostolic Fathers, and the Didache. Even if one dislikes the conservative sexual codes of the New Testament, it would take a wild stretch of imagination to claim that these ideas betrayed the intentions of a sexually radical Jesus. And the words used so damningly in Paul's epistles (arsenokoitai, malakoi) unquestionably do refer to "man-to-man sex."

Being safely situated in Florida, Dr. Miller can afford to hold fast to his agenda, to the extent of dismissing the perils of massacre and forced conversion facing the Christians of Nigeria and other lands. And Dr. Miller denounces the archbishop for following motives that are "political rather than theological"?

The Druyun Case

In the September 2002 *Atlantic*, Len Winner stated in a letter to the editor, "James Fallows portrays the Washington bureaucrat Darleen Druyun as a clever, almost heroic defender of the taxpayers' money. I think the reverse is true." Fallows responded, "As for Len Winner's complaint, I tried to stress in the article that many things could still go wrong with the JSE. But if Darleen Druyun and her colleagues are judged by results, particularly in cost control, so far they've done surprisingly well." Maybe Fallows could provide an update, in light of Boeing's having fired Druyun and the chief financial officer, Michael Sears, for unethical conduct, and the Defense Department's investigation into whether Druyun improperly shared with Boeing pricing data from Airbus. Indeed, it could be an informative story, since Sears and Druyun "served" on boards of organizations, and Sears received two honorary doctoral degrees. Will these organizations and univer-

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sities follow Boeing's lead, or will they continue to honor those accused of unethical conduct?

Brian Pangrle
Spokane, Wash.

James Fallows replies:

First, background on the Darleen Druyun story. Through 2001 and 2002, while Druyun was a senior acquisition official for the Air Force, she negotiated and enthusiastically supported a controversial deal whereby the Air Force would spend \$20 billion or more to lease 100 Boeing 767s for use as military tankers. Opponents of the deal said it would be cheaper simply to buy new airplanes, and that in any case Airbus would offer planes for less. During the negotiations Druyun was also in secret contact with Boeing about taking a job there when she retired from the government. She left the government late in 2002, began work as a Boeing executive in January of 2003, and was fired by Boeing (along with Michael Sears, the man who hired her) last November, when news of the secret talks leaked out. Full details are available from the Web site of the Project on Government Oversight, pogo.org, which took an active role in exposing the problem.

Druyun's actions are a mystery in the literal sense: she has refused to give interviews or make public statements, so any explanation she may have is unknown. Her downfall is more deeply mysterious in the novelistic sense. Through the previous thirty years of her career she was known for an almost ostentatious sense of propriety. She made enemies mainly by scolding others for not living up to her announced standards. Although almost none of the newspaper stories about her firing reminded readers of this fact, in the fall of 2001 Druyun had played a major role in a much more important decision involving Boeing. This was the competition between Boeing and Lockheed Martin to build the new Joint Strike Fighter, the contract for which seemed certain to be the most lucrative defense contract in history, potentially worth \$200 billion. (See "Uncle Sam Buys an Airplane," June 2002 Atlantic.) Two years after playing a leading part in the choice of Lockheed Martin rather than Boeing for that contract, Druyun was disgraced for apparently accepting favors from Boeing. If and when what happened in those two years is revealed, the story will be fascinating.

Nuclear Iran

I find the map accompanying Terrence Henry's "Nuclear Iran" (The World in Numbers, December Atlantic) to be specifically misleading with respect to Israel. It does not show Israel as having weapons production, weapons technology, and delivery systems. Yet for years the global press has reported—to Israeli silence, and based on insider leaks (Mordechai Vanunu)—that Israel has all these components. Today the BBC and NPR report that the International Atomic Energy Agency has asked Israel to bring its atomic-weapons programs into the international order.

Zakaria Thomas
McLean, Va.

Terrence Henry replies:

The map for "Nuclear Iran" details which countries have exported items to Iran for use in its nuclear program, not the nuclear capabilities of individual countries. The map is titled "Iran's Import Path to Nuclear Autonomy, 1979–Present," and its purpose is explained quite clearly in the second paragraph of the text.

Advice & Consent

Although we are grateful for Christopher Hitchens's review of Victor Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* ("Pictures From an Inquisition," December Atlantic), we are obliged to point out a certain number of errors and misconceptions in Hitchens's otherwise exemplary piece.

Hitchens states that Serge's "novels and poems and memoirs, most of them directed at the exposure of Stalinism, were mainly composed in jail or on the run"—as for example, "in the Orenburg camp, deep in the Ural Mountain section of the Gulag Archipelago." Orenburg is not a Gulag camp in the Ural Mountains but, rather, a small city on the Ural River, on the border of Central Asia. Serge described this place in a long chapter of *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*—one of the two books ostensibly being reviewed.

More bothersome is Hitchens's overdramatized heroic image of a Serge writing "in jail or on the run." It would

have offended Serge's probity and modesty to exaggerate his sufferings. He would also have been offended by the misconception of his aims as a literary artist in the line of the Russian novelists. Alas, Hitchens perpetuates the old myth of Serge the militant turned writer by default.

Equally serious is an error of omission. Serge lived and died a socialist—as fiercely opposed to capitalism as he was to totalitarian communism. His reputation was "ground to powder" not "between the upper and nether millstones of Hitler and Stalin" but between the millstones of capitalism and communism. For this reason Serge remains unpalatable in the era of neo-liberalism and U.S. military hegemony. His *Memoirs* are very uncomfortable reading (or re-reading) for anyone who has the least indulgence for such anti-human and anti-socialist abominations as nationalism, patriotism, militarism, and imperialism.

Richard Greeman
Victor Serge's literary executor
Vladimir Kibalchich
Victor Serge's son
Cuernavaca, Mexico

The short story "The Red Carpet," by Lavanya Sankaran (December Atlantic), is absolutely wonderful. Simple, unmelodramatic, and most untypical in its depiction of the fault lines within a traditionally conservative society. Thanks for this excellent eye-view across the ocean.
Gwendolyn Driscoll
Timonium, Md.

Corby Kummer ("Pride of Place," December Atlantic) calls it "genius" for John Paul to put an iconic engraving of Che Guevara on the label of his vin gris, and "whimsy" for Jimi Brooks to put Trotsky on Runaway Red. I hope you will provide Cameron and Brooks with complimentary copies of the December issue: then they—and Kummer, too—can read Christopher Hitchens on Victor Serge, Mark Steyn on Elia Kazan (who lined up against "apologists for thugs and tyrants"), and Jonathan Rauch on "The Forgotten Millions" of communism's victims.

Alan Emdin
Brooklyn, N.Y.



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THE AGENDA

THIS MONTH, *why pols court rock stars; the culture war over gay marriage; Michael Straight in memoriam*

JOSHUA GREEN

"Celebrity association has taken on a new importance in politics." Each Democratic hopeful has a campaign aide "charged with outreach to the entertainment community." PAGE 32

FRANKLIN FOER

"If [Matt] Daniels is a bellwether, gay marriage seems likely to emerge as the issue that defines the political limits of compassionate conservatism." PAGE 39

JOSHUA GREEN

"Nothing is more hazardous to a political career than the Confederate flag. Like Sherman's march, it lays waste to everything in its path." PAGE 42

MARK STEYN

"The only distinguishing feature of Michael Straight's lethargic progress through the American establishment is that he was a Soviet spy." PAGE 46

CHRISTOPHER SHEA

"America's Most Wanted": A list PAGE 47

PRIMARY SOURCES

"Marijuana may not make users more likely to break the law, but it probably makes them more likely to get caught." PAGE 48

THE WORLD IN NUMBERS

"Communism did not create authoritarianism; rather, it reinforced pre-existing forms of illiberal governance." PAGE 52

THE HOLLOW ARMY

The U.S. military is stretched to the breaking point—and one more crisis could break it

BY JAMES FALLOWS

.....

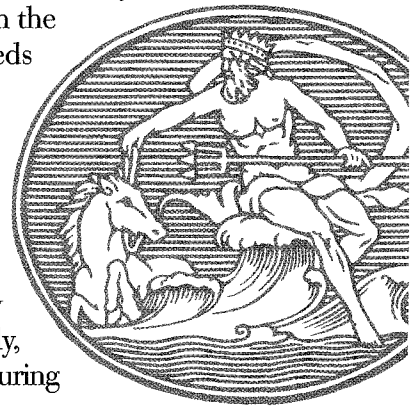
The United States spends more on armed forces than do all other countries combined; the resulting arsenal is more than a match for any opposing power and for nearly any conceivable coalition of foes. No one disputes that American military supremacy is an international reality. But our military has become vulnerable in a way that is obvious to everyone associated with it yet rarely acknowledged by politicians and probably not appreciated by much of the public. The military's people, its equipment, its supplies and spare parts, its logistics systems, and all its other assets are under pressure they cannot sustain. Everything has been operating on an emergency basis for more than two years, with no end to the emergency in sight. The situation was serious before the invasion of Iraq; now it is acute.

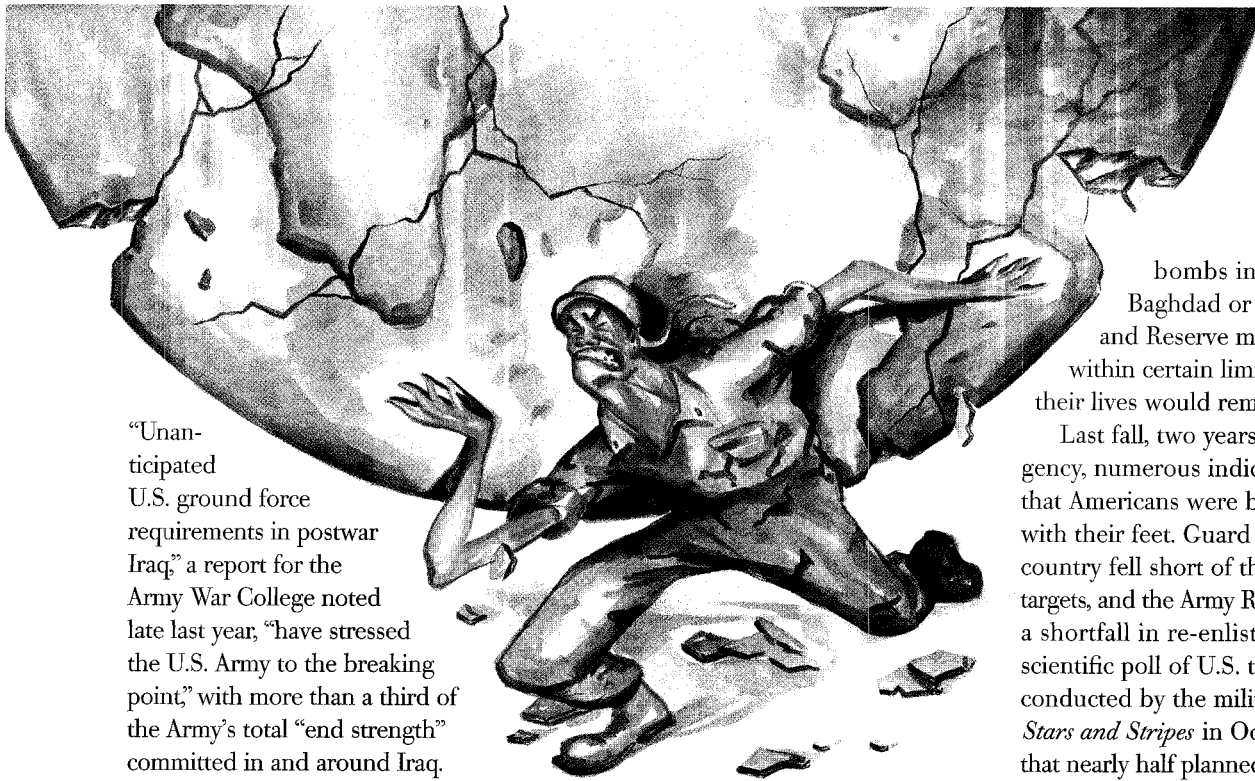
A dozen years ago, when the Soviet Union collapsed, the United States was freed from the threat that had driven its military planning throughout the preceding decades. In the 1990s scores of bases were closed, and hundreds of thousands of soldiers were demobilized. When the first President Bush launched the Gulf War against Iraq, two million Americans were on active military duty. When the second President Bush launched Operation Iraqi Freedom, the active-duty "end strength," or head count, was only 1.4 million. Total military spending also fell, though much less dramatically, at the end of the first Bush Administration and during Bill Clinton's first term.

During Clinton's second term America's foreign military obligations began to expand, mainly through the commitment in the Balkans, but also with missions in Latin America and Central Asia. As George W. Bush took office, the Army's leadership was already complaining that a smaller force could not indefinitely play a larger role. In the late 1990s Army units were being mobilized for "contingency deployments" fifteen times as frequently as a decade before.

Obviously, everything changed after 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It's a slight exaggeration to say that the entire U.S. military is either in Iraq, returning from Iraq, or getting ready to go. But only slight.

The basic problem is that an ever leaner, numerically smaller military is being asked to patrol an ever larger part of the world.





"Unanticipated U.S. ground force requirements in postwar Iraq," a report for the Army War College noted late last year, "have stressed the U.S. Army to the breaking point," with more than a third of the Army's total "end strength" committed in and around Iraq. "Operation Iraqi Freedom and its aftermath argue strongly," the report said, "for an across-the-board reassessment"—that is, for an increase of U.S. force levels.

Meanwhile, barely noticed, the United States still has some 75,000 soldiers in Germany, 41,000 in Japan, 41,000 in Korea, 13,000 in Italy, 12,000 in the United Kingdom, and so on, down through a list of more than a hundred countries—plus some 26,000 sailors and Marines deployed afloat. The new jobs keep coming, and the old ones don't go away. Several times I have heard officers on Army bases refer mordantly to the current recruiting slogan: "An Army of One." The usual punch line is, "That's how many soldiers are left for new assignments now."

Three things are wrong with the current situation. The most immediate and obvious is what it does to the troops. In the flush of patriotism after 9/11, those in uniform were asked to make extraordinary sacrifices, and they did. For much of the time since then the Army has imposed "stop loss" policies, which prevent members of the military from retiring or resigning, and amount to a form of forced labor for those who have already chosen to serve. Members of the Reserves and the National Guard, many of whom signed up with the understanding that they would be "weekend warriors," have

been mobilized for one-year stints since 9/11. Just before Thanksgiving, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced that another 15,000 Reserve and Guard members would be called up this spring for as much as a year's service in Iraq, in addition to some 43,000 already mobilized. This year nearly 40 percent of the U.S. presence in Iraq will be from the Guard and the Reserves. The family and business disruptions caused by these unexpected mobilizations are incalculable.

Some reservists and active-duty soldiers no doubt thrive on unexpected assignments. But for the military as a whole, the stepped-up "ops tempo," or pace of operations, is hard to sustain with a volunteer force. Since the elimination of the draft, in 1973, the military has had to compete with the rest of the U.S. economy for manpower. It has done so in material ways, by increasing pay and benefits, and with its traditional appeal to those seeking challenge, service, and personal growth. But it has also offered volunteers a certain amount of control over their destiny, because they could always resign if they chose. And although recruiters would never put it this way, the enlistees of the 1990s could reasonably assume that the greatest physical danger they would face would come during training exercises, not from roadside

bombs in a place like Baghdad or Fallujah. Guard and Reserve members could, within certain limits, assume that their lives would remain normal.

Last fall, two years into the emergency, numerous indicators suggested that Americans were beginning to vote with their feet. Guard units across the country fell short of their recruiting targets, and the Army Reserves reported a shortfall in re-enlistments. An unscientific poll of U.S. troops in Iraq conducted by the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* in October found that nearly half planned not to re-enlist. "We are expending the force and doing little to ensure its viability in the years to come, years we have been assured it will take to win the war on terrorism," retired Army General Frederick Kroesen wrote in a military journal on hearing that reservists would be mobilized for a second year. "It might be prudent now to ask the managers who decreed the current second-year Reservists' extensions what they plan for the third year."

An overworked military can function very well for a while, as ours has—but not indefinitely if it relies on volunteers. "We are in serious danger of breaking the human-capital equation of the Army," Thomas White, a retired general and a former Secretary of the Army, told me last year. "Once you break it, it takes a long time to put it back together. It took us over twenty years after Vietnam."

The second problem is that America has so many troops tied down in so many places that, for all its power, it is strangely hamstrung. Despite our level of spending and our apparent status as the world's mono-power, the United States has few unused reserves of military strength. Sending troops in a hurry to the Korean DMZ—or to Iran, or the Taiwan Strait—would mean removing them in a hurry from some other place where, according to U.S. policy, they are also needed.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIM BOWER

The military press has been abuzz with the news that four divisions, representing nearly half the Army's active-duty strength, are now officially in the two lowest readiness categories, because of their service in Iraq. These divisions—the well-known 82nd Airborne, 101st Airborne, 1st Armored, and 4th Infantry—will spend six months this year repairing machines, restocking supplies, and resting soldiers before returning to fully ready status. During the 2000 presidential campaign George W. Bush said, "The next President will inherit a military in decline"—in part because under the Clinton Administration two Army divisions were classified as unready because of their service in the Balkans. In a pinch all these units could of course fight and win. But throughout America's era as a world power, governments under both parties have wanted the country to seem overprepared—extra-formidable—so that our adversaries will know the United States has the means to do almost anything it chooses. Now America is overextended. The limits on U.S. power are more apparent than they were before we committed troops in Iraq.

The third problem involves national strategy. Our stated ambitions are wholly out of sync with the resources America can bring to bear. Even now, despite solemn promises, we do not have enough soldiers to occupy and democratize Iraq while also fulfilling previous commitments in many other places around the globe. Soon even fewer U.S. troops will be available to enter any other necessary engagement.

As its currency sinks and its alliances fray, the United States relies more on "hard" military power for its influence than on the variety of cultural, intellectual, diplomatic, and technological assets that the political scientist Joseph Nye, of Harvard, has called "soft power." Yet even as the reach of U.S. hard power expands, the country avoids both the financial and the human costs of maintaining a military establishment. Roughly one American in

200 is on active military duty—the lowest proportion in a century.

While increasing America's worldwide obligations, the Bush Administration has been reluctant either to shore up traditional soft-power assets, especially alliances, or to take the steps necessary for maintaining hard power. In particular the Administration is dead set against increasing the military's end strength. This is partly because it would be expensive: each soldier adds \$50,000 to \$100,000 to the annual Pentagon budget. But mostly it is because Rumsfeld believes so strongly and argues so forcefully, inside and outside the Administration, that the military must become smaller, as part of a "transformation" to a radically leaner and more agile force, before anyone can think about making it larger again. Rumsfeld's determination to reform the military is his most admirable trait. But as he showed by insisting on a disastrously small force for Operation Iraqi Freedom, when gripped by theory Rumsfeld can be blind to practical realities. The military—particularly the Army—is hidebound and inefficient. But right now, for the jobs it has been assigned, it is also too small.

Logically speaking, it's easy to see a solution to the military's problems. But politically, it's hard, because the solution necessarily involves one or more of the following: The United States can cut back on its promises and commitments. Or it can spend significantly more money to attract enough soldiers to a volunteer force. Or it can find ways other than voluntary enlistment to bring them in.

Some advantages and disadvantages of each approach are obvious; others will emerge only with debate. But the next President will have to take some or all of these steps. Let's hear from the candidates about what the plan will be. ■

James Fallows is a national correspondent for The Atlantic.

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MADONNA WANTS ME

Every candidate now needs a "celebrity wrangler"—matchmaker to the stars

Last December, after a series of meetings aimed at securing a coveted endorsement of his presidential campaign, representatives of General Wesley Clark divulged news that was carried worldwide: Madonna had authorized the campaign to let it be known she had met the four-star general and was "very impressed" with him. She stopped short of a full-blown endorsement; that would require further negotiation. But the campaign was nonetheless exultant.

"What this does," Lara Bergthold, Clark's political director, explained, "is raise our profile and get people to take a look at our candidate."

Had it happened in an earlier election, the excitement aroused by this not-quite-endorsement might have seemed out of proportion to the event. But celebrity association has taken on a new importance in politics. Each of the Democratic presidential candidates has made a point of courting celebrities, often personally, and each campaign has a staffer charged with outreach to the entertainment community—a "celebrity wrangler."

Landing celebrity endorsements has become nearly as complicated as winning those of traditional power brokers such as union chiefs and congressmen. Many celebrities now employ full-time political advisers and, like any special interest, demand a lengthy vetting process before they will agree to offer public support. Naturally, candidates are eager to trumpet their successes. To date A-list support has been bestowed on John Edwards (Ashton Kutcher, Dennis Hopper), Howard Dean (Paul Newman, Rob Reiner), John Kerry (Jerry Seinfeld), Richard Gephardt (Tony Bennett), and Dennis Kucinich (Willie Nelson). Just as Washington buzzes with rumors of whom various heavyweights will endorse, so the entertainment world carefully tracks the loyalties of such politically minded alpha celebrities as Barbra

Streisand and the Hollywood mogul David Geffen.

Like much in Democratic politics today, collecting endorsements from the entertainment world reached its full vogue under Bill Clinton. But more than a reflexive desire to mimic Clinton is driving today's celebrity chase.

POLITICS

JOSHUA GREEN

Celebrities invariably provide attention, something campaigns constantly need. As the cost of campaigning soars, associating with the famous both helps fundraising and generates

what strategists call "earned media"—valuable television airtime that, unlike political advertising, does not have to be paid for. But what really seems to have intensified the process is tangible proof of celebrity's effect on politics: Arnold Schwarzenegger's runaway victory in California. Tom Sheridan, a Democratic lobbyist and a representative of U2's lead singer, Bono, says, "The collateral benefit—or damage—of Schwarzenegger's election is the sense that celebrity matters."

Politicians have traditionally sought out actors and musicians as a way of attracting the youth vote—young people being a group that secretly baffles and terrifies them, leaving them susceptible to the belief that the imprimatur of Madonna and other pop-culture icons can, like some secret handshake, unleash torrents of support. As a member of the eighteen-to-thirty-four-year-old demographic, I've always thought this notion had a whiff of fraud, or at least of patronizing self-deception. Larry Sabato, the director of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia, put it most succinctly when he remarked recently, "The

only people dim enough to vote for a candidate because Madonna endorsed them generally don't vote."

Over the past decade, however, the public's interest in celebrities has waxed just as its interest in politics has waned; the courting of politically minded celebrities reflects a kind of cosmic convergence. "It's a way to break through to audiences who get their news in nontraditional ways," says Michael Feldman, a Democratic strategist. "A lot of people don't watch the evening news, but they do watch Leno's monologue." Although their approval may or may not directly generate votes, celebrities do generate money, crowds, and enthusiasm—which in the end can amount to the same thing.

No one better epitomizes the politico-celebrity ideal than the New Jersey rocker Jon Bon Jovi, who became a zealous supporter of Al Gore





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during the 2000 election and established a new benchmark for the ways in which celebrities can help a political campaign. In addition to hosting fundraisers and speaking on Gore's behalf, Bon Jovi energetically went to work soliciting money and involving his friends in the campaign. He traveled with little more than a guitar, often speeding ahead when Gore's tour bus was running late to hold a restless crowd with a spontaneous acoustic set. "Jon was the ultimate example of loyalty and dedication from someone who was willing to leverage his celebrity on behalf of a political cause," says Feldman, who at the time was Gore's traveling chief of staff. Such was Bon Jovi's dedication to the candidate that he famously enlivened Gore's post-recount concession party, a sullen affair until he summoned Tom Petty and Stevie Wonder to what turned into a late-night bash. Bon Jovi is, unsurprisingly, much sought after among Democratic candidates.

Top celebrities stand to become an even more valuable asset in this election. Prompted by Howard Dean's astonishing ability to raise money online, political campaigns are rapidly evolving to become more heavily Internet-focused. E-mail databases have become the new coin of the realm. For all the buzz surrounding Madonna's eventual endorsement of Clark, which she gave several weeks after her initial public approval, it is her vast database of fans that seems to be the real prize. The thousands of e-mail addresses belonging to Madonna's fan-club members almost certainly represent a means of tapping possible Clark supporters and contributors; likewise, a letter of support from Madonna distributed to Clark's own e-mail list would add glitz and guarantee additional media attention. "Sending out a letter is not as visible" as a public endorsement, a Clark staffer told me, "but it could potentially have a much more far-reaching impact for the campaign."

Even in areas of policy, certain celebrities have established themselves as powerful presences to be consulted and wooed. Following the success of his debt-relief campaign in 2002, Bono established a foundation called DATA (Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa). On World AIDS Day the whole slate of Democratic candidates solicited Bono's opinion and coordinated their messages with his before issuing public statements.

Despite intense hustling in the run-up to the Democratic primaries (the Bon Jovi camp, for example, was rumored to be unhappy when Clark erroneously took its support for granted), the full impact of celebrities on this political cycle probably won't become clear until the general election. The economics of campaigning

tial for his support is enough to make all the Democratic candidates—except Kucinich—check in personally with Spahn on a regular basis. Celebrities can be expected to take a much more active role than they have in years past in their effort to defeat the incumbent. "The one very real, discernible difference [in Hollywood] this year," Spahn says, "is the unanimity of desire to defeat George Bush."

Current polls show that more young voters would support Bush than any Democratic rival. Perhaps because of this, candidates have stepped up their youth-oriented appeals; in an ironic video filmed for a CNN/Rock the Vote "youth forum" in November, the straitlaced General Clark is seen earnestly discussing the merits of the flamboyant rap duo OutKast with

Politicians have traditionally sought out actors and musicians as a way of attracting the youth vote— young people being a group that secretly baffles and terrifies them, leaving them susceptible to the belief that the imprimatur of Madonna and other pop-culture icons can, like some secret handshake, unleash torrents of support.

make it difficult for a primary candidate to hold the kind of star-studded events that bring in large donations: even if a top entertainer agrees to waive a fee, the costs of sound, lighting, and the requisite union labor are often prohibitive.

Once money and support have coalesced behind a nominee, however, celebrities can prove an indispensable source of cash. Andy Spahn, the political adviser to David Geffen, estimates that Geffen raised \$15 to \$20 million for Bill Clinton and associated Democratic causes during the Clinton Administration—putting him among the very top fundraisers. So far Geffen, like Clinton, has chosen to remain on the sidelines this time. But even the poten-

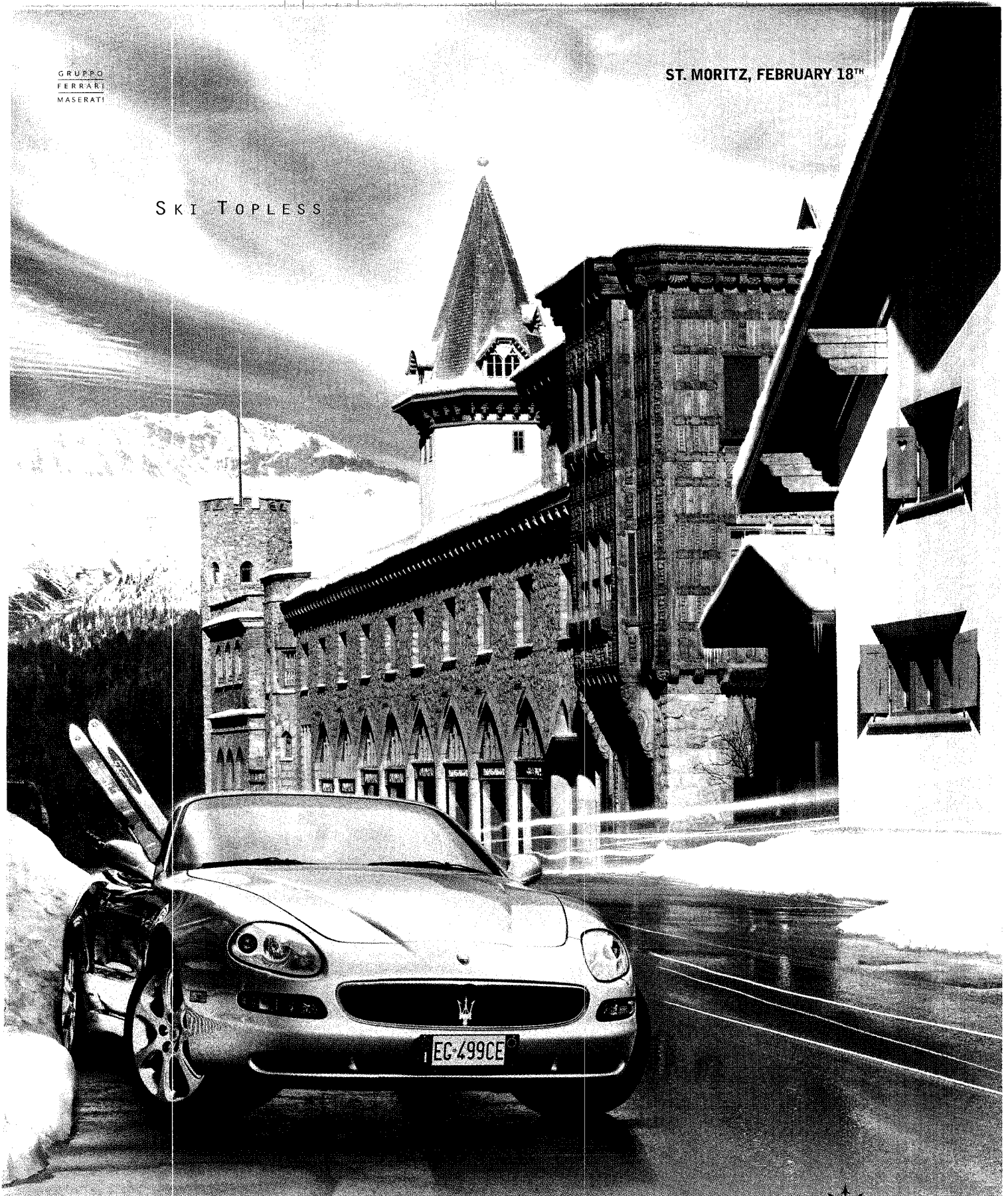
young fans. "The OutKast tie connected us to a younger demographic," Lara Bergthold explained to me during a phone interview one afternoon in early December. "It was a tongue-in-cheek way of saying we get it." She paused. "Can you hear me? Do you hear that?" She held her phone up to a television tuned to MTV. OutKast had just been nominated for six Grammy Awards, and as the group's unofficial champion, ironic or otherwise, Clark was enjoying an unexpected lift: he had just popped up on the MTV show *Total Request Live*. Bergthold returned triumphantly to the line. "Well," she exclaimed, "there you go." ■

Joshua Green is a senior editor of The Atlantic and a contributing editor of The Washington Monthly.

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- liver disease
- heart failure
- high blood pressure
- had an allergic reaction to aspirin or other NSAIDs
- had a serious stomach problem in the past.

Tell your doctor about:

- any other medical problems or allergies you have now or have had.
- all medicines that you are taking or plan to take, even those you can get without a prescription.

Tell your doctor if you develop:

- serious stomach problems such as ulcer or bleeding symptoms (for instance, stomach burning or black stools, which are signs of possible stomach bleeding).
- unexplained weight gain or swelling of the feet and/or legs.
- skin rash or allergic reactions. If you have a severe allergic reaction, get medical help right away.

How should I take VIOXX?

VIOXX should be taken once a day. Your doctor will decide what dose of VIOXX you should take and how long you should take it. You may take VIOXX with or without food.

Can I take VIOXX with other medicines?

Tell your doctor about all of the other medicines you are taking or plan to take while you are on VIOXX, even other medicines that you can get without a prescription. Your doctor may want to check that your medicines are working properly together if you are taking other medicines such as:

- warfarin (a blood thinner)
- theophylline (a medicine used to treat asthma)
- rifampin (an antibiotic)
- ACE inhibitors (medicines used for high blood pressure and heart failure)
- lithium (a medicine used to treat a certain type of depression).

VIOXX cannot take the place of aspirin for prevention of heart attack or stroke. If you take both aspirin and VIOXX, you may have a greater chance of serious stomach problems than if you take VIOXX alone. If you are currently taking aspirin for prevention of heart attack or stroke, you should not discontinue taking aspirin without consulting your doctor.

What are the possible side effects of VIOXX?

Serious but rare side effects that have been reported in patients taking VIOXX and/or related medicines have included:

- Serious stomach problems, such as stomach and intestinal bleeding, can occur with or without warning symptoms. These problems, if severe, could lead to hospitalization or death. Although this happens rarely, you should watch for signs that you may have this serious side effect and tell your doctor right away.
- Heart attacks and similar serious events have been reported in patients taking VIOXX.
- Serious allergic reactions including swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and/or throat which may cause difficulty breathing or swallowing and wheezing occur rarely but may require treatment right away. Severe skin reactions have also been reported.
- Serious kidney problems occur rarely, including acute kidney failure and worsening of chronic kidney failure.
- Severe liver problems, including hepatitis, jaundice and liver failure, occur rarely in patients taking NSAIDs, including VIOXX. Tell your doctor if you develop symptoms of liver problems. These include nausea, tiredness, itching, tenderness in the right upper abdomen, and flu-like symptoms.

In addition, the following side effects have been reported: anxiety, blurred vision, colitis, confusion, decreased levels of sodium in the blood, depression, fluid in the lungs, hair loss, hallucinations, increased levels of potassium in the blood, insomnia, low blood cell counts, menstrual disorder, palpitations, pancreatitis, ringing in the ears, severe increase in blood pressure, tingling sensation, unusual headache with stiff neck (aseptic meningitis), vertigo, worsening of epilepsy.

More common, but less serious side effects reported with VIOXX have included the following:

Upper and/or lower respiratory infection and/or inflammation
Headache
Dizziness
Diarrhea
Nausea and/or vomiting
Heartburn, stomach pain and upset
Swelling of the legs and/or feet
High blood pressure
Back pain
Tiredness
Urinary tract infection.

These side effects were reported in at least 2% of osteoarthritis patients receiving daily doses of VIOXX 12.5 mg to 25 mg in clinical studies.

The side effects described above do not include all of the side effects reported with VIOXX. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects. Any time you have a medical problem you think may be related to VIOXX, talk to your doctor.

What else can I do to help manage my arthritis pain?

Talk to your doctor about:

- Exercise
- Controlling your weight
- Hot and cold treatments
- Using support devices.

What else should I know about VIOXX?

This leaflet provides a summary of certain information about VIOXX. If you have any questions or concerns about VIOXX, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis or pain, talk to your health professional. Your pharmacist can give you an additional leaflet that is written for health professionals.

Do not share VIOXX with anyone else; it was prescribed only for you. It should be taken only for the condition for which it was prescribed.

Keep VIOXX and all medicines out of the reach of children.

Inactive Ingredients:

Oral suspension: citric acid (monohydrate), sodium citrate (dihydrate), sorbitol solution, strawberry flavor, xanthan gum, sodium methylparaben, sodium propylparaben.

Tablets: croscarmellose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, and yellow ferric oxide.

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MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

Matt Daniels believes he's found a solution to the political problem of gay marriage. So why do his fellow conservatives want to divorce him?

Most Americans oppose gay marriage but support civil rights and legal equality for gays, whereas the far right opposes even the latter. On many such issues President Bush has been able to placate conservatives without alienating mainstream voters, by wrapping conservative policies in moderate language—practicing, to use a term he made famous, “compassionate conservatism.”

Karl Rove, Bush's chief strategist, keeps a key lesson of the 1992 presidential campaign firmly in mind: when Republicans try to fuel the culture war, as Pat Buchanan did at that year's Republican convention, they generally provoke a backlash. Now Bush faces the challenge of applying this lesson yet again.

Until November, when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in favor of legalizing gay marriage, Bush and his advisers had little reason to focus on the issue—but Matt Daniels, the head of a small (seven-person) public-policy group called the Alliance for Marriage, has been immersed in it for years. Daniels has already devised a compassionate-conservative approach to gay marriage—one that in many respects seems tailored to Bush's re-election campaign. But it is not at all clear that Bush could afford to adopt it even if he wanted to.

Although Daniels lacks extensive experience in Washington, he has achieved surprising influence in the gay-marriage debate, because he came to it so early. During the first years of this Bush Administration, while most social conservatives worried about stem-cell research and abortion, Daniels engineered the drafting of the Federal Marriage Amendment, a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage nationwide. By the end of last year he had persuaded more than a hundred representatives to co-sponsor the bill.

What makes Daniels's strategy such a good fit for compassionate conservatism is his pragmatism. According to Daniels, marriage between men and women is a “transcendent, immemorial institution.”

But whereas most conservatives condemn homosexuality as a biblical sin, Daniels understands that the public's tolerance needs to be taken into account. Accordingly, Daniels says, he crafted the FMA to ban gay marriage while leaving intact California's domestic-partnership rights and Vermont's civil-union law (some

liberals argue that its language would invalidate civil unions).

And although Daniels has a contentious style and a booming voice, which becomes even louder when he inveighs

against gay marriage, he is careful not to condemn gays themselves.

Signing on to Daniels's approach would seem to allow Bush once again to throw a bone to his conservative base while positioning himself as a moderate. But in this instance the evangelical right may not take the bone. Although it has gone along with Bush's breaches of conservative ideology in many cases (his decisions to levy steel tariffs, to drop school vouchers, to add a new federal entitlement in the form of the Medicare drug benefit), signs are that gay marriage will be different. According to Paul Weyrich, the head of the Free Congress Foundation, an influential conservative lobbying group, “I have yet to see the movement as energized as it is over defense of marriage.” Daniels's own experience shows how unwilling the far right is to compromise on this issue. Instead of being hailed for his success in promoting the Federal Marriage Amendment (which would, after all, achieve one of the far right's main objectives), he has been denounced as a sellout and an enemy of the movement. “He is a disaster,” one prominent social conservative told me bluntly. If Daniels is a bellwether, gay marriage seems likely to emerge as the issue that defines the political limits of compassionate conservatism. And it could test whether social conservatives can win popular support for their positions by framing issues in secular, rather than religious, terms.

BRIEF LIVES

FRANKLIN FOER

Daniels often waxes lyrical about the virtues of traditional marriage—marriages of men and women, who become fathers and mothers—but he is describing a model that he himself experienced only briefly. He was born in 1963, the only child of Irish parents living in Spanish Harlem. His father, Guy, was a published poet and had translated the works of the Russian authors Vladimir Mayakovsky and Andrei Sakharov. He was also a fickle husband, bolting from one marriage to the next. Guy left the family when Matt was three. Matt's mother worked as a secretary and provided a stable home. But during the 1970s the neighborhood became a morass of crime and drugs. “I was mugged probably twenty times by the time I got to college,” Daniels told me when we spoke recently. One evening in 1971, his mother was attacked by four men, who left her with a broken back. Unable to work, she grew dependent on welfare, and on alcohol. The family's prospects for a better life dwindled.

Intent on escape by his own means, Daniels won a scholarship to Dartmouth. But after graduation he found himself back in his old environment: his mother was dying of congestive heart failure, and he returned home to care for her. During this time he began searching for a spiritual mooring. He worked in a homeless shelter and in three soup kitchens, all run by black churches. The ministers welcomed him into their congregations, and it gradually dawned on Daniels that he had been born again. “That became a foundation for the rest of my life,” he says.

Daniels had found not only religion but also a professional calling: helping the urban poor. In 1993 he entered the University of Pennsylvania law school on a scholarship conditional on his commitment to a public-interest career. For most people the public-interest path leads to liberal organizations. But Daniels grew increasingly averse to the liberal values of his professors. (On the first day of a family-law class a feminist instructor declared, “I would challenge anyone to show how the absence of men from families has any



adverse effect on children.”) After graduating, in 1996, he became the director of the Massachusetts Family Institute, the Boston outpost of the evangelical broadcaster James Dobson’s growing empire.

At the institute one issue consumed Daniels: the importance of fathers. He commissioned surveys whose results illustrated the prevalence and harms of single-mother families, and he worked for laws to make divorce harder to get. Above all, he dedicated himself to opposing gay marriage, which he sees as the biggest threat to the traditional family. Daniels says that his views on gays and gay marriage were greatly influenced by his association with black churches. Like their white counterparts, black evangelicals draw their views on homosexuality from a literalist interpretation of the Bible. But because of their political alliance with social liberals in the Democratic Party, they generally refrain from public pronouncements of these views. Daniels himself tries to make his argument strictly sociological. Before tinkering with the definition of marriage, he says, we would need good social science on the probable long-term effects—especially because, he believes, no-fault divorce and other legal changes have weakened marriage. “It’s rather irresponsible on the part of the proponents,” he told me. “If we’re wrong, as we’ve been wrong before, we’re going to pay the price for a long time.”

In 1999 Daniels moved to Washington to found the Alliance for Marriage. The group enlisted conservative legal scholars to write the Federal Marriage Amendment. When Daniels presented the document, in 2001, it struck many conservatives as a waste of time. They thought they had already won the battle: in 1996 President Bill Clinton had signed the Defense of Marriage Act, forbidding federal recognition of same-sex unions; thirty-seven state legislatures had issued their own bans.

Daniels’s prescience about the re-emergence of the gay-marriage issue stemmed from his years in Boston, where, in addition to running the institute, he had earned a doctorate in politics at Brandeis University. In his dissertation he castigated the courts for, he contended, usurping the legislatures as the most important authors of social policy. In the course of his research he pored over countless law reviews, in which, he noticed, liberal professors had painstakingly built a jurisprudential case for gay marriage. He believed it would be only a matter of time before courts gave gay marriage their imprimatur. When the Massachusetts court did so last November, conservatives suddenly realized that amending the Constitution was not a redundant exercise—it was essential to their cause.

Daniels’s savvy was also evident in his launching of the FMA. He had made the case for his amendment to leading social conservatives, but he hadn’t tried to enlist them as his main allies, because of their polarizing language and stance. (“The traditional social-conservative movement harkens back to an era of white Protestant cultural hegemony,” he told me.) And because he knew that gay-rights activists would cast marriage as a civil right and evoke the African-American struggle, he had devised a strategy to pre-empt this line of argument: he chose African-Americans, including the Boston minister Ray Hammond and the civil-rights veteran Walter Fauntroy, to be his spokesmen.

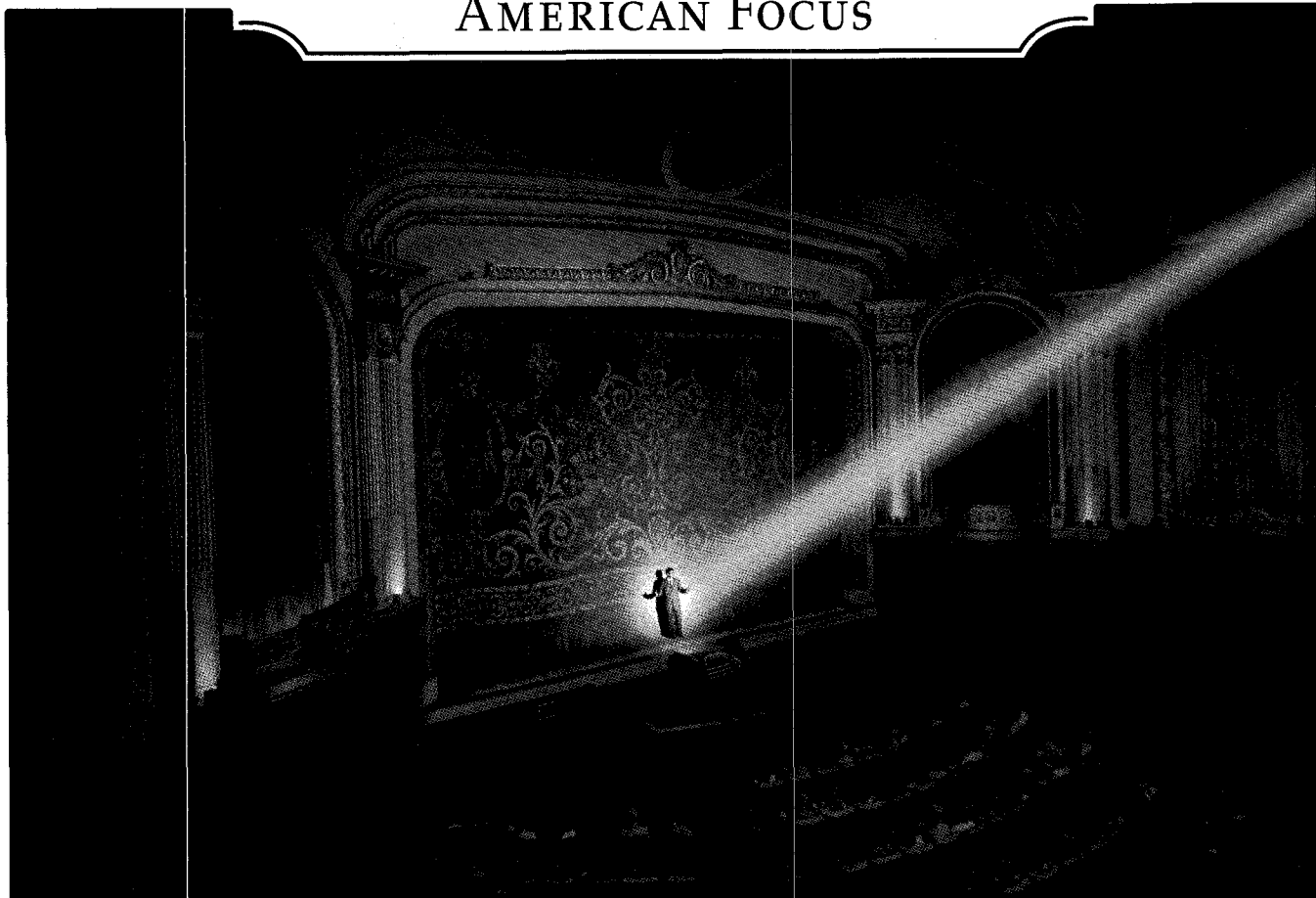
But for all the obvious political virtues of the Daniels approach, it has one major

flaw: conservative activists hate it. Many of them—including Daniels’s comrades from his Massachusetts Family Institute days—have called him to express their ire. One told Daniels that his coalition resembled the bar scene in *Star Wars*. (Daniels replied, “When the right-wingers get together, *that’s* the bar scene in *Star Wars*. Those are the alien forms.”) Members of the Family Research Council and other groups on the religious right have chastised congressional sponsors of the FMA. Because of these groups’ belief that homosexuality is a sin, they are unwilling to make any accommodations—and they are angry at Daniels for trying to do so. They are preparing for a showdown, which will take place in the coming months. The leaders of nearly every major conservative activist group—James Dobson, the Reverend Jerry Falwell, and the former drug czar William J. Bennett among them—have banded together to create an anti-gay-marriage front: the Arlington Group. They have written their own constitutional amendment, which would ban both gay marriage and civil unions. Given this group’s political heft, congressional backers of the FMA may shift their support.

One well-documented characteristic of the Bush Administration is its scrupulous adherence to the lessons of the first Bush presidency. Although George H.W. Bush’s approval ratings were as high as 90 percent after the Gulf War, he was seen as betraying conservative activists when he raised taxes, and this contributed to his loss in the 1992 election. Karl Rove has worked hard to avoid this mistake, carefully attending to a coalition of social and economic conservatives. Bush risks losing a crucial element of this base if he takes a relatively moderate stance on gay marriage. But if he caters to it too rigorously, he risks losing the mainstream support he has so assiduously courted. ▀

Franklin Foer is an associate editor at The New Republic. His book How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization will be published in July.

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Investment Managers

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

Georgians want the Confederate emblem back on their state flag, and are frustrated that a referendum this month won't give them that option. What they don't know is that if the emblem's creator were alive, he'd vote to bury it

It's said that Social Security is the third rail of American politics, but an honest look would turn up something just as deadly. Though it lacks New Deal stature, nothing is more hazardous to a political career than the Confederate flag. Like Sherman's march, it lays waste to everything in its path. In recent years alone the flag has ruined governors from both parties (the Democrat Roy Barnes, of Georgia, and the Republican David Beasley, of South Carolina); debased the honorable John McCain, who first dodged it and then awkwardly renounced it; and stalled Howard Dean's momentum when no one and nothing else could. Yet the Confederate flag lacks Social Security's reputation as an issue not to be tampered with—and is all the more lethal because of that. Politically, it is truly the Lost Cause.

The latest chapter in this saga will unfold this month, when Georgia holds a referendum on its state flag. For years the banner above Georgia's capitol dome prominently incorporated what historians know as the Beauregard battle flag, popularly called the Southern Cross—white stars emblazoning a broad blue saltire against a scarlet background, a design most Americans consider the classic symbol of the Confederate South. Since state lawmakers adopted it to protest school integration, in 1956, it has encouraged the image of Georgia as an unreformed backwater.

The flag's fiercest critics, in Georgia as elsewhere, have been black leaders angered by its association with segregation and slavery and white businessmen hurt by the economic dislocations that accompany such strife. In an effort to extinguish the controversy and celebrate a New South of tolerance and prosperity, in 2001 Governor Roy Barnes replaced the flag with one that did not feature the Southern Cross. Voters responded the following year by replacing Barnes. They elected Sonny Perdue, the state's first Republican governor since Reconstruction, who appeared as untroubled by the

flag's legacy as he was attuned to its power. This stunning upset of Barnes (once a dark-horse presidential candidate) was led by rural white voters who turned out in record numbers on the strength of Perdue's promise to hold a referendum on the state flag—and the implication that they would be allowed to restore the Confederate emblem. "It's like a family secret," Perdue explained to *The New York Times*. "The only way to heal this is with the sunshine of coming together and dealing with it in a very forthright manner."

POLITICS **JOSHUA GREEN**

What happened next was anything but forthright. Even before assuming office Perdue began backing away from the flag. He suddenly grew vague about the referendum, and he banned the flag from his inaugural ceremony—fruitlessly, it turned out, because flag supporters, sensing that their man was weaseling out of his commitment, chartered planes to circle overhead towing banners that displayed the 1956 flag and the message "Let us vote—You promised!" When details of the referendum finally emerged, flag supporters were apoplectic: they would be offered the choice of replacing the Barnes flag not with the 1956 one but with another, designed by a state legislator, that didn't feature the Southern Cross. Perdue has been beset by angry "flaggers" ever since. Polls show that a majority of Georgians want to vote on the 1956 flag. They also show that Perdue is among the least popular new governors. The man who once led the charge to restore the symbol of the Confederacy appears ever more likely to be another of its victims. Regardless of how the referendum is decided, the issue will end as it always does: with neither side appeased, and with this family secret, like most, continuing to exact its toll long after everyone hoped it was forgotten.

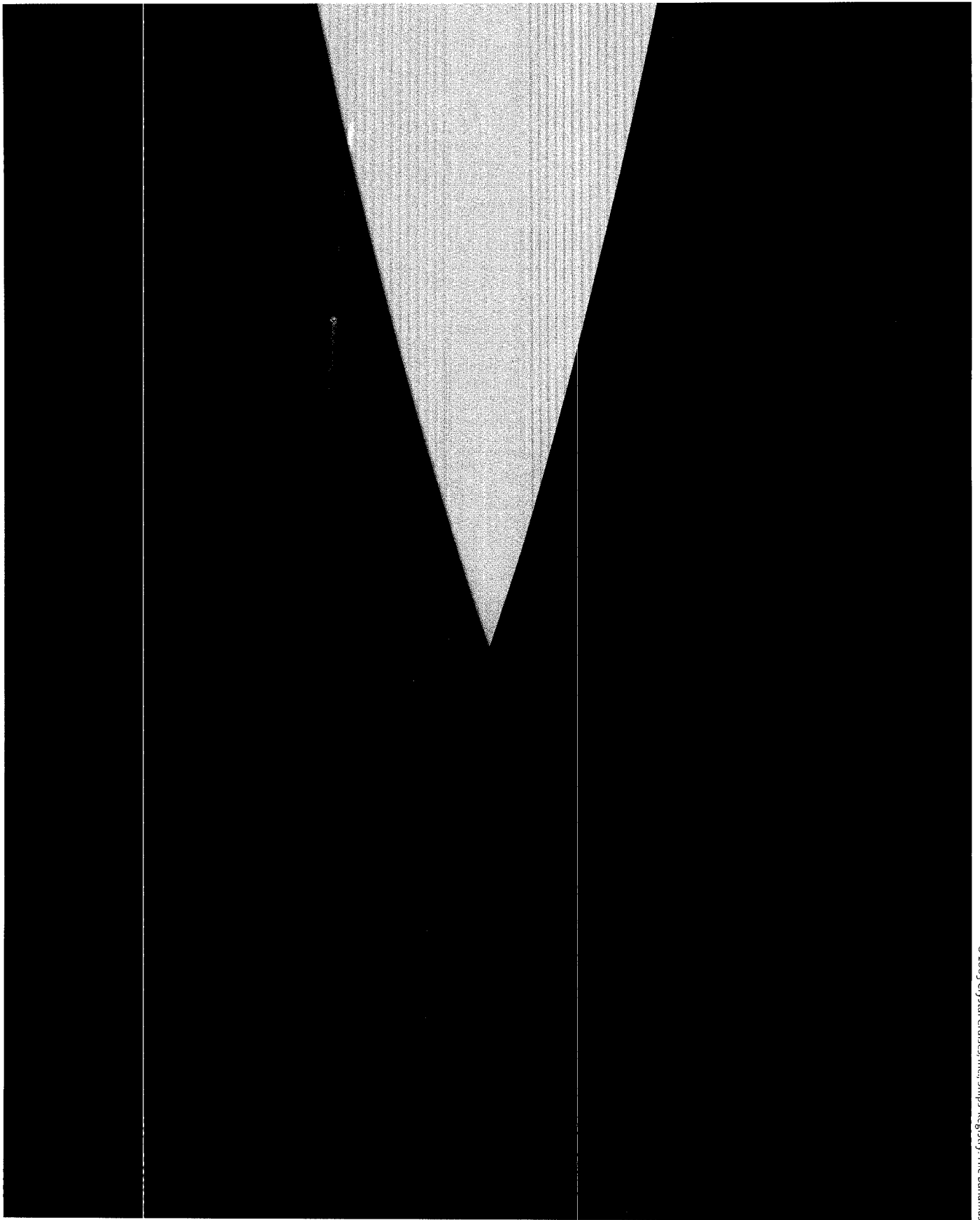
I'm no Georgian, and certainly not ally of Perdue's. But I can't help feeling implicated each time a do-gooder like Barnes is felled by the flag, or an opportunist like Perdue profits from it. As it happens, I have my own family secret: my

full name is Joshua Beauregard Green, and according to family lore I am directly descended from the very man who created the Confederate flag—General P.G.T. Beauregard. As a child I hated the name. I can still recall the moment when it was revealed to my classmates—broadcast, really—by a teacher calling the roll on the opening day of first grade. Had I been raised in the South, my middle name would no doubt have conferred great honor. I was raised, however, in Connecticut, where an exotic, mellifluous middle name conferred only torment from the instant my peers discovered it.

And yet as I grew older, the name instilled a certain curiosity about the Confederacy, the flag, and above all P.G.T. himself. Flag supporters rarely invoke Beauregard's name, and never seem to dwell on the man, though the lionization of Robert E. Lee and other Confederate leaders increases by the year. I recently discovered that there's a reason for this. The details of Beauregard's life point to a great irony: if General Beauregard were alive today, he'd be in the front ranks of those trying to get rid of the Southern Cross.

To the extent he is remembered at all, Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard is the "Hero of Fort Sumter" and the man who led Confederate forces to victory in the First Battle of Manassas. Early in the Civil War there was no more romantic figure among Confederate officers than Beauregard, a vainglorious French Creole from New Orleans. He won the nickname "Little Napoleon," chiefly because of his French heritage and his obsession with Napoleonic warfare, though his diminutive stature and general comportment suggest that the name was more broadly fitting—Beauregard exhibited every Gallic tendency save the impulse to surrender.

The bombardment of Fort Sumter was in fact not much of a battle. The squat brick fortress that commands Charleston Harbor was manned by fewer than a hundred Union soldiers and not yet completed when Beauregard demanded



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its surrender, in April of 1861. When its chief officer refused, Beauregard initiated the first action of the war, in the early morning of April 12. The fight ended without a single death—save that of one Confederate horse (not Beauregard's)—when Sumter's commander capitulated, thirty-four hours later.

Overnight Beauregard became the Confederacy's first hero, a status that suited his dramatic self-image. In the words of T. Harry Williams, the author of the biography *P.G.T. Beauregard, Napoleon in Gray* (1955), "He was the South's first paladin," a flamboyant figure who stood out alongside the bearded austerity of his colleagues. Beauregard was rumored to travel with hordes of concubines and wagonloads of champagne; he was known to have been a favorite of Charleston ladies, who smothered him with letters, flowers, flags, and scarves. According to Tony Horwitz's *Confederates in the Attic* (1998), Beauregard had a servant to wax his moustache daily, and summoned his own cow from New Orleans, claiming that his delicate stomach could abide no other milk. Southerners were smitten with Beauregard's aristocratic mien and aloof distinction, and his legend quickly radiated throughout the Confederacy.

Though his bloodless victory at Sumter was a dubious achievement, as the most celebrated general in the South, Beauregard was next assigned to its most important theater, northern Virginia, to stop the Federal advance on the newly established capital of Richmond. Here he exhibited a tendency that would come to define him. Though a talented military engineer, he had a flair for arriving on the scene with little knowledge of the enemy and dashing off grandiose battle plans that couldn't possibly be put into effect. Dutifully adhering to the Napoleonic principle of concentration of force, he proposed that General Joseph E. Johnston's army in the Shenandoah Valley join his in Manassas to "crush successively and in detail the several columns of the enemy, which I have supposed will move on three or

four different lines of operations." He helpfully instructed his President, Jefferson Davis, that his plan "should be acted upon at once." This was despite glaring deficiencies, ranging from the logistical difficulty of combining armies to Beauregard's implication that he, a brigadier general—and not his senior, Johnston—would command the force. Davis swiftly rejected the plan.

While Beauregard lamented his fate, Federal troops attacked his left flank, and the First Battle of Manassas began.



From a technical standpoint it was for both sides a marvel of military incompetence. His original hope for an offensive dashed, Beauregard quickly devised a ludicrously complex plan that failed when a series of his orders never reached subordinates. A third plan also was near collapse when Beauregard spotted an approaching column to his rear. He could not make out whether it was Union or Confederate. The soldiers turned out to be his own, and the added strength proved sufficient to break the Federal line and secure the most important Confederate victory to date. Beauregard was fêted even more vigorously than after Sumter—promoted to full general,

and briefly (and through no lack of encouragement on his part) mentioned as a challenger to Jefferson Davis within the Confederate hierarchy.

The confusion at Manassas led Beauregard to resume his search for a way to better distinguish his troops from the enemy. He had first submitted a rather theatrical request that his men be allowed to wear brightly colored scarves on the battlefield. This was declined. Next he pointed out how difficult it was to differentiate the official Confederate flag from the Stars and Stripes, after which it had been designed, and suggested that Congress be asked to adopt a new flag. This, too, was declined. So Beauregard resolved to design a battle flag—the flag that most Americans now think of as the Confederate flag, and the one to which Howard Dean was referring when he mentioned southerners in their pickup trucks. (The three official Confederate flags have been largely forgotten.) The Beauregard battle flag was formally presented to the troops on November 28, 1861.

It was early in the war, but this marked the pinnacle of Beauregard's military career. He would travel west to lead the failed assault at the Battle of Shiloh, where his army was eventually vanquished by Grant's. He did go on to achieve intermittent minor victories, and played a crucial part in the defense of Richmond. But Beauregard was continually hampered by his penchant for elaborate plans and his rigid adherence to Napoleonic strategy—particularly when enemy forces did not conform to these same principles and tactics, as he invariably expected they would. He may have been best summed up by a reporter for *The New York Times* who interviewed him after the war and concluded that Beauregard was not a first-rate military man but a first-rate second-class man.

Those most nostalgic for the Old South and the Confederacy tend not to look much beyond Lee's capitulation to Grant at Appomattox and the end of the Civil

War. They might be less nostalgic were they more familiar with the postbellum career of Beauregard, who was one of the critical southern figures of Reconstruction. Like other Confederate leaders, he was stripped of his right to vote and hold office, and his papers and possessions were seized and examined for evidence of treason. (Officials discovered that Beauregard's papers consisted "mainly of mash notes from the general's female admirers." These may have been the only compromising documents he could not bring himself to destroy.) But unlike virtually all his former colleagues, Beauregard understood, and prospered during Reconstruction. His driving ambition for military glory was redirected to business success, which he pursued with singular purpose.

He also participated in Louisiana politics, generally with an eye to his own gain. After an 1872 election descended into violent chaos, Beauregard became involved with a now long-forgotten effort, the Louisiana Unification Movement. In an effort to dislodge Reconstruction—and stabilize the business climate—a group of conservative Democratic business leaders, Beauregard prominent among them, founded the Reform Party, a major platform of which was better race relations and acceptance of blacks' political and civil rights. This was not out of any special concern for the plight of blacks but for purely pragmatic reasons. The Republican government held power mainly because of its ability to draw the support of black voters. Reformers like Beauregard, Williams wrote, "were convinced that the salvation of the state lay in persuading the colored voters to leave the Republicans and unite with the whites in a new political organization," which would drive out the carpetbaggers.

It would be an understatement to say that these sentiments were not widely shared in New Orleans. But Beauregard, beloved throughout the state and always eager to be the focus of attention, campaigned vigorously on behalf of

the movement, which in due course attracted many of the city's prominent black leaders. In 1873 a party committee that Beauregard chaired put forth a detailed written plan for conciliating the races. In Williams's words,

[It] advocated complete political equality for the Negro, an equal division of state offices between the races, and a plan whereby Negroes would become landowners. It denounced discrimination because of color in hiring laborers and in selecting directors of corporations, and called for the abandonment of segregation in public conveyances, public places, railroads, steamboats, and public schools.

Beauregard himself introduced this document, which was later presented at a public meeting beneath a banner that read "Equal Rights—One Flag—One Country—One People." Lest there be any doubt about which flag this referred to, Beauregard's plan resolved, as one of its concluding pronouncements, to cultivate "a broad sentiment of nationality, which shall embrace the whole country, *and uphold the flag of the Union.*" (italics added)

This was a program that must have delighted Beauregard: in true Napoleonic fashion, it proposed a concentration of forces to defeat a superior enemy. But like Beauregard's military plans, it was wildly ambitious and flawed. It assumed, somewhat remarkably, that white landowners would willingly give over their land to blacks, and that working-class whites would accept blacks as social equals. Unremarkably, the movement collapsed. Beauregard withdrew from politics and found the best way to profit within the corrupt Reconstruction South: for sixteen years he was the public face of the notorious Louisiana state lottery. He died in 1893, a rich man.

The argument that Beauregard would today oppose the return of the Confederate flag is not a revisionist one put forward by a sympathetic descendant. Beauregard's ignorance and racism were unmistakable. He once predicted that "seventy-five years hence, the traveler

in this country will look in vain for traces of either an Indian, a negro, or a buffalo." It is simply an argument that takes into account Beauregard's coldly pragmatic nature and thoroughgoing self-interest. He put his financial well-being above his racist instincts, and led the unification movement sheerly for the sake of economic expediency.

Beauregard has slid into obscurity, his early military triumph and Confederate heroism clouded, in the eyes of present-day southern romantics, by his positively northern ability to prosper in the New South. By becoming rich, his biographer Williams believed, Beauregard became "a forgotten man in the Southern tradition."

Economic reasons also appear to be at the heart of Perdue's capitulation on the referendum. The governor rightly fears the economic damage that a newly risen Confederate flag would inflict on Georgia—not to mention his political career. Twice more since his inauguration he has been besieged by airplanes towing banners, and these have moved beyond the pleading tone at his inauguration to a more threatening one suggesting that Perdue may not be long for public office. "The GOP is DOA," a recent banner warned. (I can't help thinking that Beauregard would approve of this approach—Napoleon was a great exponent of surprise attacks.)

Each side in today's debate over the flag insists on moral and ethical absolutes, offering little room for compromise. Neither will be satisfied by a court decision or the executive decree of an easily ousted governor. Flag supporters who speak of heritage and historical accuracy would best honor Beauregard's legacy—and help their beloved South in the process—by shifting their battle to the economic front and fighting to make the South more competitive with the North. That's a cause the flag's inventor would have eagerly, and no doubt showily, rushed to endorse. ■

Joshua Green is a senior editor of *The Atlantic* and a contributing editor of *The Washington Monthly*.

THE IMPERFECT SPY

Michael Straight (1916–2004)

He would have liked the *Washington Post* headline:

MICHAEL STRAIGHT DIES;
MAGAZINE EDITOR, NEA OFFICIAL

Yawn. On to the next page. Straight was a mediocre editor of the family mag, *The New Republic*, and it's doubtful whether anyone other than fellow arts bureaucrats wants to read of his service as Deputy Assistant Associate Whatever at the National Endowment for the Arts. Michael Whitney Straight led a long, comfortable, undistinguished life as the sort of chap who turns up in the index of other people's biographies as the third fellow on the left in the picture of the committee meeting or the wedding party or the mixed doubles. He was related by blood or marriage to everyone from the Vanderbilts to Jackie Onassis. When he returned to America from Cambridge University, in 1937, he was in need of career advice and so looked up an old family friend, President Roosevelt.

But the only distinguishing feature of his lethargic progress through the American establishment is that Michael Straight was a Soviet spy.

At this point, wherever he is now, Mr. Straight is no doubt objecting, as he did to the *London Review of Books* in 1995, "I was not a spy in the accepted usage of that word."

Whatever gets you through the night. But he was a spy accepted and used by the Soviet NKVD, at the same time as he was a speechwriter for President Roosevelt. He lived with his secret until ousted by Britain's *Daily Mail*, in 1981. And once his past was known it seemed at least partially to explain why a man born with all the right connections had made so little of them. Straight was the American end of Britain's "Cambridge Spies," to use the title of last year's very appreciative BBC drama about them. They were recruited by the Soviets in the 1930s and came close in the 1950s to gaining control of Her Majesty's Secret Service. When it all began to unravel, the

first to defect were Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, followed by the so-called "Third Man," Kim Philby, after which there was a Fourth Man, Sir Anthony Blunt, Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, and possibly a Fifth, Sir Roger Hollis, director of MI5. And then there was Michael Straight, who wasn't the Sixth, Seventh, or Eighth Man so much as the Straight Man—not in the sense that the others were mostly homosexual, but in that he was a dull stick among a coterie of flamboyant, hard-living, hard-drinking, supremely confident clubby Englishmen. In 1935 Straight and Blunt (which sounds like a spoof spy team) were among a group of Cambridge "idealists" on pilgrimage to Moscow. "Do I look like a proletarian?" Straight asked an acquaintance, anxious to fit in. "No," came the reply. "You look like a millionaire pretending to be a proletarian."

And so he did. One day he'd be out on the street selling copies of the *Daily Worker*, the next off to ski at Klosters. His father had died in the Great War, and his mother was a goofy Whitney heiress who took him to England to serve as an early guinea pig in the "progressive" school she helped found. The thirties were the heyday of the Stalinist toff, the languid upper-middle-class Englishman for whom, after public (private) school, the rigors of Bolshevism were a breeze. Straight was the American aristocracy's contribution to the cause and frankly not a success. Blunt was a frightful snob who adored the royal family his entire life and saw no contradiction between fawning on his sovereign and betraying her. With Straight, it was all more tortured: Arnold Deutsch, who helped run the Cambridge spies for Moscow, despised the rich American. "He sometimes behaves like a child in his romanticism," he reported. "He

thinks he is working for the Comintern"—that is, just doing a little freelance PR for the cause, not spying for dark men in the shadows. "He must be left in this delusion for a while."

He was an insecure man who wanted to be part of the gang but never quite was. In 1963, offered a post at what became the NEA and convinced he wouldn't withstand a background check, he finally went to the FBI and then MI5 and spilled the beans on Blunt. "We always wondered how long it would be before you turned us in," drawled Sir Anthony, bored by his least impressive protégé even in Straight's moment of "courage."

But it took a while. In 1937 Blunt gave Straight his "assignment": return to America, get an important job, and feed information to Moscow. Straight was "reluctant," but in the end agreed. Eleanor Roosevelt got him into the State Department, and he started supplying his Soviet contact with, he insisted, nothing

more than copies of the briefing papers he wrote. No "hard information." Certainly nothing useful. The small lies we tell ourselves in our darkest moments shrivel in even the faintest light. His most plausible defense was that he was as half-hearted about spying as about everything else—as William

Safire wrote, "no purpose or passion guided his double life."

Meanwhile, Burgess, Maclean, Philby, and Blunt advanced rapidly to the point where Philby was on the short list to succeed as "C," the head of the Secret Service, and Maclean could conceivably have become the British ambassador in Washington, and Burgess is said by some to have leaked the information that led to the slaughter of General MacArthur's men at the Yalu River in Korea, in 1950. Had Straight come clean in, say, 1942, many lives would have been saved. "I needed one beckoning word or gesture to lead me on,"



POST
MORTEM
**MARK
STEYN**

wrote Straight. "Without it I lacked the resolution to carry my impulse through." So he dithered for decades.

When Straight was an infant, Joseph Conrad once popped round to the family townhouse on Fifth Avenue. Young Michael was in the nursery, but looking back he liked to think that downstairs Conrad was reading from *Under Western Eyes*, the story of Razumov, the young student whose betrayal of an older friend costs him his soul. If Straight has to go down in history as a double agent, he'd prefer not to be a spy "in the accepted usage" but something a little more literary. The comparison is itself an act of self-flattery of the kind that got poor old Razumov into trouble when he was called in by the authorities:

Razumov smiled without bitterness. The renewed sense of his intellectual superiority sustained him in the hour of danger. He said a little disdainfully: "I know I am but a reed. But I beg you to allow me the superiority of the thinking reed over the unthinking forces that are about to crush him out of existence."

That's how the agonized prose of *After Long Silence*, his apologia, feels—like a Victorian ham actor laying it on with a trowel, sustained by a misguided sense of his intellectual superiority. In 1948, with a condescension some of his successors at *The New Republic* may find vaguely familiar, Straight dismissed Truman as a man who had "a known difficulty in understanding the printed word." Not, I think, as much difficulty as Straight had in understanding the plain meaning of who he was and what he'd done. Underneath his carefully cultivated mask, Blunt was blunt. Straight was never straight, especially with himself.

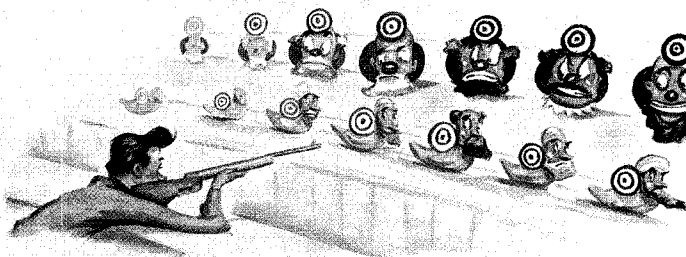
In the end, most obituarists took him at his own estimation: the "reluctant" spy. What does "reluctant" mean? He did as he was ordered, but, unlike Philby and Blunt, he didn't have much fun. As Conrad wrote, "Let a fool be made serviceable according to his folly." ▀

Mark Steyn is a columnist for Britain's *Telegraph Group*, the Chicago *Sun-Times*, and other publications.

THE LIST

AMERICA'S MOST WANTED

Washington is paying more and more to find its Most Wanted



The United States began putting prices on the heads of international terrorists in 1984, following a series of hijackings, bombings, and assassinations targeting Americans, mostly in the Middle East. The State Department implemented a program called Rewards for Justice, which initially worked like an old-time bounty list: money was offered in return for information on specific criminals and terrorists. In 1988 the State Department made the program open-ended: informants may be paid for information about *any* terrorists or would-be terrorists, whether or not they are on its list.

The price for information is rising as terrorist acts increase. Rewards were initially capped at \$500,000; they are now capped at \$5 million, although the Secretary of State can exceed that figure at his discretion. To prevent retribution, the rewards are given privately and the names of the informants are withheld; but the State Department, hoping to attract more informants, is seeking ways to publicize the granting of rewards. As for domestic criminals and terrorists, the FBI determines rewards on a case-by-case basis (and does not come close to matching State Department prices).

The list below shows the prices put on certain terrorists and criminals.

- 1. \$25 million** Saddam Hussein*, the former President of Iraq; Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, and three other top al-Qaeda leaders—Saif al-Adel, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed ▴
- 2. \$15 million each** Qusay Hussein and Uday Hussein♦, Saddam's sons
- 3. \$10 million** Izzat Ibrahim al-Doori, the former vice-chairman of the Iraqi Republican Command Council, who is believed to have organized attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq
- 4. \$5 million** Countless people, including Jamal Mohammad al-Badawi and Fahd Mohammed Ahmed al-Quso, Yemenis suspected in the 2000 attack on the U.S.S. *Cole*; ten men implicated in the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania; Abdul Rahman Yasin*, suspected of participation in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing; and twenty-three men, including the former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for war crimes in Rwanda and Bosnia
- 5. \$2.5 million** The 2001 anthrax mailer or mailers
- 6. \$2 million** Ramzi Yousef▴, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing; those responsible for the destruction of Pan Am Flight 103▴
- 7. \$1 million** Eleven former top Iraqi officials; James "Whitey" Bulger, an alleged Boston mobster suspected of involvement in numerous murders; Eric Rudolph*, suspected of bombing an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1998, and of the 1996 Olympic Park bombing, in Atlanta; and the Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega*
- 8. \$500,000** The Washington, D.C.-area snipers*
- 9. \$200,000** Lower-level former Iraqi officials—those not on the deck-of-cards most-wanted list
- 10. \$50,000** Everyone on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list except for bin Laden and Bulger, including Richard Steve Goldberg, a creator of child pornography in Long Beach, California; and Robert Fisher, who murdered his wife and two children and then blew up the family house in Scottsdale, Arizona

* Captured, no reward paid; ▴ Captured, reward paid; ♦ Killed in combat, reward paid;

▴ Reward initially \$2 million; * Reward to be administered after trials

Christopher Shea writes a column about academia for The Boston Globe's "Ideas" section.

The EU's suppressed report on anti-Semitism; the real relationship between pot smoking and crime; how nonvoting aliens affect U.S. elections; why Republicans benefit more than Democrats from high taxes; Al Sharpton's taste in hotels

What is the role of
a parent company?

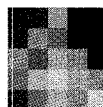
To provide strength and
guidance for its family.

To help each of its
operating companies reach
its high standards and
strive to meet the evolving
expectations of society.

Because to be the kind of parent
company that we want to be,
it takes more than world-class
people and performance.

It takes leadership.

That's the role of Altria Group, Inc.,
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POLITICS

The Bellhop Primary

As primary season approached, the candidate with the most money was a skinflint on lodgings and the one with the least treated himself very well. According to Fundrace, a Web site that tracks campaign expenditures, Al Sharpton favors the posh comfort of the Four Seasons, where his average hotel bill is \$3,598—far larger than any other candidate's. (George W. Bush, a distant second, drops an average of \$607.) In contrast, although Howard Dean may have grown up in Park Avenue luxury, he knows how to stretch a dollar: his campaign favors Marriott hotels, and his hotel bills there average just \$172—the lowest among the major candidates. John Kerry's victory in Iowa, meanwhile, suggests the wisdom of his investment in a local institution.

—"Hotel Spending," Fundrace.org, Eyebeam

FAVORITE HOTELS OF THE CANDIDATES

And how much they spend per stay

Candidate	Hotel	Avg. Bill
SHARPTON	Four Seasons	\$3,598
BUSH	Hilton	\$607
GEPHARDT	Marriott	\$551
MOSELEY BRAUN	No single favorite	\$436
KUCINICH	Holiday Inn	\$288
LIEBERMAN	Hyatt	\$245
EDWARDS	Holiday Inn	\$238
KERRY	Hotel Fort Des Moines	\$202
DEAN	Marriott	\$172

every 1,000 boys age six and under in India. Today there are 927. In an effort to curb this trend, India a decade ago imposed a ban on the use of ultrasound to determine sex. But the UNFPA's data suggest that the ban has been ineffective, particularly in the country's wealthier areas. In southwestern Delhi, one of India's richest districts, the ratio declined in the 1990s to a shocking 845 for every 1,000; sixty-nine other prosperous districts in India also saw the ratio decline by more than 50 girls per 1,000 boys over the past decade. During that time the total population of India rose by 21 percent, to 1.03 billion, suggesting that the "missing" girls number in the millions

—"Missing: Mapping the Adverse Child Sex Ratio in India," United Nations Population Fund

That Giant Sucking Sound

Ten years after its passage NAFTA hasn't stripped America of manufacturing jobs, as many doomsayers predicted, but neither has it been the boon to the Mexican economy that many of its boosters promised. Despite unprecedented growth in international trade and productivity, most Mexicans still

await that much heralded yet elusive benefit of trade liberalization: more—and higher paying—jobs in Mexico. Real wages in Mexico are lower today than they were in 1994, and show no sign of catching up with U.S. wages. And whereas NAFTA has created some jobs in Mexico's export-manufacturing sector, it has destroyed just as many in other sectors, with job losses falling heavily on Mexico's already stressed rural population. As the volume of U.S. agricultural products (including heavily subsidized corn) entering Mexico has increased, 1.3 million agricultural jobs have evaporated. Given that Mexico cannot afford a social safety net for this population, it isn't surprising that migration from rural Mexico to the United States has risen significantly (by 183 percent from 1994 to 2002). Nor is it surprising that these migrants are sending billions of dollars home, to ease the economic hardship of those left behind. A new report from the Pew Hispanic Center finds that Mexicans received \$14.5 billion from relatives working in the United States during 2003—far more than America sent

south of the border in development aid, and almost as much as Mexico earned from foreign oil sales. Ross Perot's promised giant sucking sound, it seems, isn't the sound of American jobs vanishing—it's the sound of Mexican laborers heading northward, and of their earnings heading south.

—"Remittance Senders and Receivers," Pew Hispanic Center; "NAFTA's Promise and Reality," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

SOCIETY

Reefer Dumbness

Many people who have spent time around marijuana users (or who, God forbid, have partaken themselves) would argue that the most serious crime the average pot smoker is likely to commit is, well, smoking pot. But anti-drug hard-liners often argue that marijuana use leads to other kinds of illegal behavior. Recently two researchers, one from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the other from the RAND Corporation, decided to test the hard-liners' theory by examining statistics on marijuana use among people arrested for various crimes. They found that those arrested for property or financial crimes (such as embezzlement) were disproportionately likely to have used pot, and some data even suggested a similar correlation for violent crime. However, when the researchers looked at *crime* rates rather than *arrest* rates, the connection disappeared entirely. (These correlations are determined by comparing a community's rate of pot use with its overall crime and arrest rates.) The conclusion? Marijuana may not make users more likely to break the law, but it probably makes them more likely to get caught.

—"Marijuana and Crime: Is There a Connection Beyond Prohibition?," Rosalie Liccardo Pacula and Beau Kilmer, National Bureau of Economic Research

For links to the reports and documents discussed in these pages visit
www.theatlantic.com/issues/2004/03/primarysources.htm



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THE UNFREE WORLD

What the demise of Soviet communism can teach us about the prospect for democracy in Iraq

As this issue goes to press, the Russian people are poised to re-elect Vladimir Putin under circumstances somewhat reminiscent of the Soviet era. In the years since he first succeeded Boris Yeltsin, Putin, a former KGB agent, has made Russia less and less democratic. He has reined in the country's regional governors, cowed its vocal business elite, and squelched political opposition in the press. Late last year United Russia, a political party created to support Putin, crushed the liberal opposition in parliamentary elections that were neither free nor fair.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. In the euphoria that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall (in 1989) and the collapse of the Soviet Union (in 1991), some Western politicians, pundits, and political scientists anticipated that

democracy would break out everywhere, including Russia. Francis Fukuyama, then a political scientist at RAND, famously proclaimed the "end of history," asserting that liberal market democracy had demonstrated its superiority as a species of polity, and would become the world's "final form of human government." Fukuyama, of course, was making a long-term prediction; he did not expect the whole world to become democratic overnight. But it is now nearly fifteen years since the Iron Curtain was lifted. Has democracy since made significant or enduring progress?

Nominally, it has: according to Freedom House, a nonpartisan research organization, forty-nine nations were added to the tally of electoral democracies from 1989 to 1996—the largest such growth over any comparable period in history. Though the rate of democratization has slowed since 1996, the trend continued through 2002. Today more than 60 percent of the world's 192 countries can technically be classified as electoral democracies.

Unfortunately, many of the regimes that have become electoral democracies over the past fifteen years cannot properly be called *liberal* democracies—systems in which the rights of citizens are truly protected against the power of the state. According to Freedom House, which annually assesses each country's level of freedom by examining political rights and civil liberties, of the 117 electoral democracies in the world, only eighty-eight are liberal democracies, or "free" countries; the other twenty-nine are illiberal democracies, or "partly free" countries. The remaining seventy-five countries are not democracies, and Freedom House classifies all of them as either partly free or "not free" on the basis of their lack of political and civil rights. All the not-free countries, with the exception of Haiti and Cuba, are in the Eastern Hemisphere (as indicated by the map to the right)—and the only free country in all of the Middle East and North Africa is Israel. Even after the great strides toward freedom of the 1980s and 1990s, 56 percent of the world's population (down from 61 percent in 1989) still lives in partly free or not-free countries.

The map provides only a snapshot of a moment in time—but the underlying trends are disturbing. Although the number of free countries has doubled in the past thirty years, the recent trend is relatively flat—in 2003 there were eighty-eight free countries, the same as in 1998. Moreover, since September of 2001 the Middle East, North Africa, and much of Asia have become less free, as governments have used citizens' fears of terrorism to justify eliminating political liberties and becoming less democratic. And last year four nations that Freedom House had officially classified as electoral democracies—Armenia, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, and Fiji—lost that designation.

In the former Soviet bloc, meanwhile, two patterns have emerged. As the USSR fell, twenty-seven countries were released from Soviet domination. But only in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States—which had a tradition of republican governance before succumbing to Stalinist expansion—did this produce liberal democracy. In the rest of the former Soviet empire liberal democracy remains completely unknown: seven of the former Soviet republics are not free, and five are only partly free. And nearly all of them have become less free over time. In fact, after Russia's parliamentary elections in December, Freedom House announced that the country may lose its nominal status as an electoral democracy. Ukraine, too, is in danger of soon falling off the list.

One lesson of the post-Soviet experience seems to be that communism did not create authoritarianism; rather, it reinforced pre-existing forms of illiberal governance, such as those found under the czars. All this suggests a major obstacle in the quest for global freedom: most of the world has no tradition—ancient or modern—of liberal democracy. This rare form of governance was mainly the product of a very specific time (the nineteenth century) and place (a small number of North Atlantic nations, including England, France, and the United States). Before this period and outside these places, authoritarianism was—and generally still is—the rule in large states.

THE WORLD'S MOST REPRESSIVE REGIMES

As identified by Freedom House in 2003

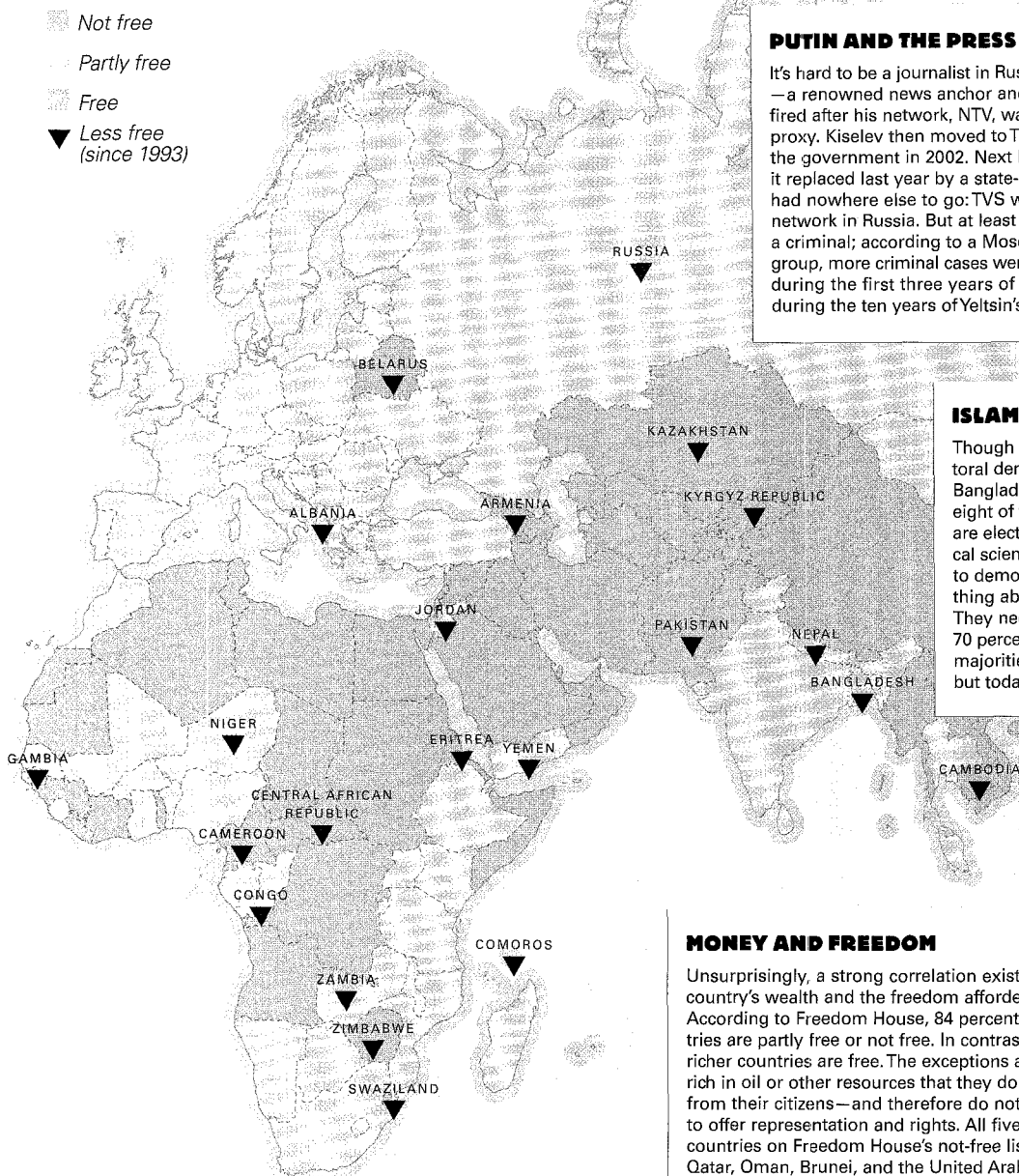
The Worst of the Worst*

Burma	military dictatorship
Cuba	Communist dictatorship
Iraq	personal dictatorship until April of 2003
Libya	personal dictatorship
North Korea	Communist dictatorship
Saudi Arabia	monarchy
Sudan	military dictatorship
Syria	military dictatorship
Turkmenistan	personal dictatorship

The Rest of the Worst*

China	Communist dictatorship
Equatorial Guinea	military dictatorship
Eritrea	party dictatorship
Laos	Communist dictatorship
Somalia	anarchy
Uzbekistan	party dictatorship
Vietnam	Communist dictatorship

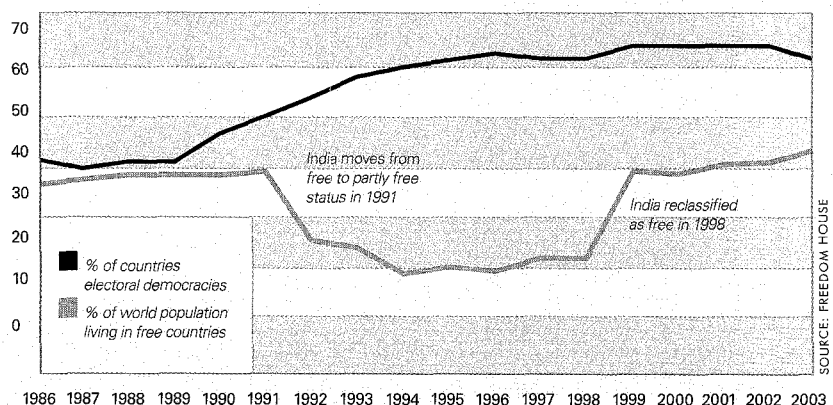
*In alphabetical order



The Bush Administration has wagered that the United States, by force of arms and aid, can transform Iraq into a liberal-democratic regime and thereby set an example for other countries in the region. The history of such efforts is not encouraging. Liberal democracy has been successfully imposed on major states only twice before—in Central Europe after World War I, and in Germany, Italy, and Japan after World War II. Except for Japan, these countries were in or near Western Europe; all, including Japan, had significant internal liberal-democratic movements at some point before occupation. Neither condition exists in Iraq. —JEN JOYNT AND MARSHALL POE

DEMOCRACY'S (FALTERING) PROGRESS

The Soviet collapse increased the number of democratic countries—but since most of those states were small, it did not substantially increase the number of free people



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THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KHAN

A new breed of American soldier—call him the soldier-diplomat—has come into being since the end of the Cold War. Meet the colonel who was our man in Mongolia, an officer who probably wielded more local influence than many Mongol rulers of yore

BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN

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In the early spring of 2003, as U.S. troops in Iraq were consolidating their hold over Baghdad, few people had their eyes on Mongolia. And yet what was happening at the time in that country—90 percent of whose foreign military training and assistance now comes from the United States—was critical to the extension of America's global liberal influence. "Mongolia is a vast country completely surrounded by two anti-American empires, Russia and China," S. Galsanjamts, a member of Mongolia's national-security council, told me recently. "It is therefore a symbol of the kind of independence America wants to encourage in the world." Today, more often than not, the United States is encouraging that sort of independence not by intervening militarily on a grand scale but, rather, by placing a few quietly effective officers in key locations around the globe.

Last year I traveled to Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia, to meet Colonel Tom Wilhelm, one of the best of this new breed of American soldier-diplomats. Wilhelm's official roles at the time of my visit included serving at the U.S. embassy as the defense attaché, as the security-assistance officer, and as the liaison for the military's Pacific Command (PACOM). The embassy is a small building and somewhat less imposing than other posts, befitting the low "threat assessment" assigned to Mongolia. The country lived under virtual Soviet domination for seventy years, a generation longer than the satellite states of Eastern Europe, and public opinion is staunchly pro-American. At the time of the Iraq crisis the Mongolians staged no anti-war demonstrations. Indeed, they deployed a contingent of 175 soldiers to Baghdad last year, to help with policing efforts—a move that marked the first entry of Mongol troops into Mesopotamia since 1258, when Hulagu Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan's, arrived and exterminated most of the population of Baghdad.

The morning I arrived at the American embassy in Ulan Bator, Wilhelm, newly promoted to colonel, greeted me wearing a gray suit, a white

shirt, a tie, and suspenders. Born in 1959, raised in Orlando, Florida, and given formative military training at West Point and the Army Ranger school, in Fort Benning, Georgia, Wilhelm had risen through the ranks of the military as the Cold War order was falling apart. On the ground in several theaters of military operation, he had witnessed the messy collapse of communism in Eurasia. Known to warlords in Bosnia as "Mean Mr. Tom," and to colleagues in Tajikistan as "Aga Tom," he became the ultimate area expert on the former Soviet empire and its shadow zones, from Yugoslavia all the way to Mongolia.

Wilhelm's plans for the morning I arrived were typical in their variety: he had to deliver personal thanks to the parents of a Mongolian-born U.S. Marine fighting in Basra, Iraq; he had to plan for a visit of the chief of the Mongolian military, Major General Tsevegsuren Togoo, to Washington; and he had to make arrangements for a visit by fourteen American brigadier generals. Also due to arrive was Lieutenant General Wallace Gregson, then the commander of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force ("III MEF" as it's written, and "Three MEF" as it's spoken). That last visit was the most important: if there were ever a land war in Asia—on the Korean Peninsula, for example—III MEF would play a role just as prominent as that played during the invasion of Iraq by I MEF, which marched from Kuwait to Baghdad.

In his office at the embassy Wilhelm kept two saddles and a tent. He likes to hunt and fish. He owns a World War II-vintage motorcycle with a sidecar. On his travels in Mongolia he took with him a bottle of Tabasco sauce, which he used liberally. I once saw him popping hot green peppers into his

mouth at a Mongolian border post, while talking up the benefits of the Harris Falcon-II Series tactical hand-held radio to a Mongolian colonel.

Of average height, with a sturdy, fireplug build, Wilhelm is an explosive, energetic man. He has a maniacal laugh. His forceful and enthusiastic manner communicates *Ready, aim,*

Robert D. Kaplan is a correspondent for The Atlantic and the author of ten books, including Mediterranean Winter: The Pleasures of History and Landscape in Tunisia, Sicily, Dalmatia, and Greece, which was published last month.

fire! with each sentence. He walks fast, and his trains of thought move faster still; on foot and in conversation I found it hard to keep up with him. He can quote from memory Robert Service's poetry of adventure and wanderlust. In e-mails he sent me before I arrived, he wrote about Central Asian history and the medieval traveler William of Rubruquis before closing with "GO ARMY, BEAT NAVY! CHEERS FROM THE STEPPE, TOM."

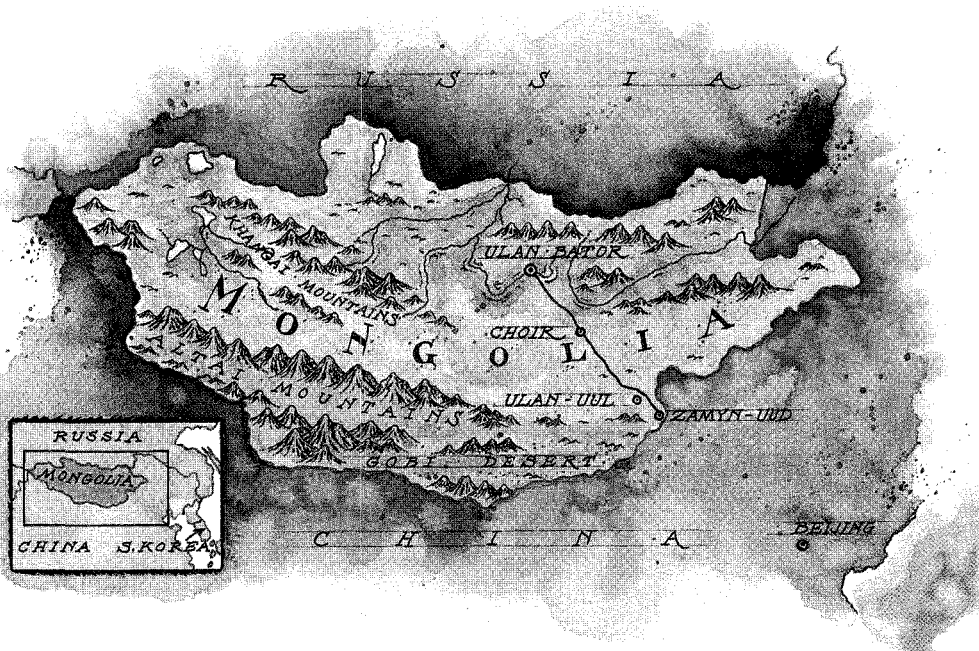
Wilhelm's assignment to Ulan Bator occurred against the following backdrop: Mongolia, with one of the world's lowest population densities, is being threatened demographically by the latest of Eurasia's great historical migrations—an urban Chinese civilization is determined to move north. China—which ruled much of Mongolia from the end of the seventeenth century until the early twentieth century, during the Manchu period—covets the oil, coal, uranium, and empty grasslands of its former possession. Given that a resurgent China has already absorbed Tibet, Macao, and Hong Kong, reabsorbing Mongolia—a country that on the map looks like a big piece of territory bitten away from China—seems almost irresistibly a part of China's geopolitical intentions.

Only three full-time defense attachés serve in Ulan Bator—representing Russia, the United States, and China, the three countries with past or future imperial interests in Mongolia. Americans, of course, are uncomfortable with the idea of having or running a global empire, but that responsibility is being thrust upon them nevertheless in Mongolia as elsewhere. And unconventional men like Tom Wilhelm, largely out of sight, are the ones carrying the load and transforming the world order. I went to Mongolia to see him in action.

Ulan Bator is a composite of any number of ex-communist capitals I have seen in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, with an additional bone-chilling bleakness. The city is dominated by gray cement and brown dirt, with barely a tree in sight. Soviet-era apartment blocks abound, and resemble penitentiaries. The stench of lignite for heating buildings lasts deep into spring. Yaks feed on weeds in garbage-strewn lots on the city's outskirts, where people inhabit traditional circular felt-lined tents, known in Mongolia as *gers* (and in Turkic countries as *yurts*). Underground utility pipes house the homeless, and shipping containers function as kiosks. When I was there, people went around with white masks over their mouths and noses, because of the SARS epidemic,

and this added a strange, futuristic element to the cityscape.

There is romance, too. Ulan Bator was once the Sacred City of the Living Buddha. The Buddhist lamaseries of Gandantegchinlen Khiid and Dashchoilon Khiid, revived since the fall of communism, are cavernous, dusky-red, gilded worlds of chanting saffron-robed monks and hammered-brass prayer wheels. Sculptures of frightening deities sit in



dilapidated wooden cases sanctified by dust, reminiscent of faded black-and-white photos in an antiquarian's library. An eighty-foot-tall gilded statue of the Buddha at Gandantegchinlen Khiid, which was built to replace one destroyed by the Communists, is a gaudy spirit of beauty and wonderment. It is a welcome contrast to the austere surroundings, dotted still with statues of local Communist bosses that, curiously, have not been torn down, and that people pass in silence.

When Wilhelm arrived in Mongolia, in 2001, U.S.-Mongolian defense relations had no focus. All that existed was a hodgepodge of unrelated aid and training programs that had not been staffed out in detail in Washington or in Ulan Bator. Mongolia's post-communist military had no realistic vision of its future. It wanted a modern air force but wasn't sure what such an air force would do, or how it would be sustained, or its aircraft maintained. Wilhelm, with the active support of Ambassador John Dinger, quickly provided a sense of purpose. He and Dinger developed a "three pillars" strategy for the country and persuaded the Mongolian military to sign on. The three pillars are:

- 1) Securing Mongolia's borders not against a conventional military threat from China (such security would be impossible) but against illegal border incursions, criminal activities to finance terrorism, and transnational terrorism itself, particularly by the Uighur separatists of western China. Aided by the Chechens and the broad militant Islamic network, Uighur extremists represent the future of terrorism in Central Asia.

MIKE REAGAN

SONY



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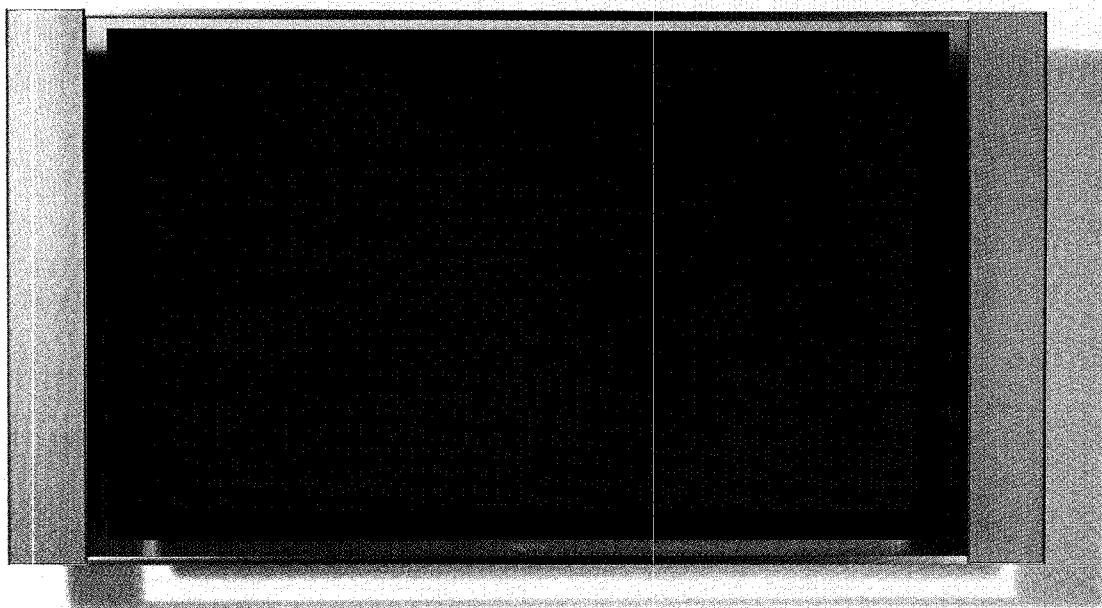
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2) Preparing the Mongolian military to play an active role in international peacekeeping, in order to raise its profile in global forums and thus provide Mongolia with diplomatic protection from its large, rapacious neighbors. The dispatch of Mongolian troops to post-Saddam Iraq elicited shrill cries of annoyance from Russia and China, but it was the first building block of this pillar.

3) Improving Mongolia's capacity to respond to natural disasters, most notably drought.

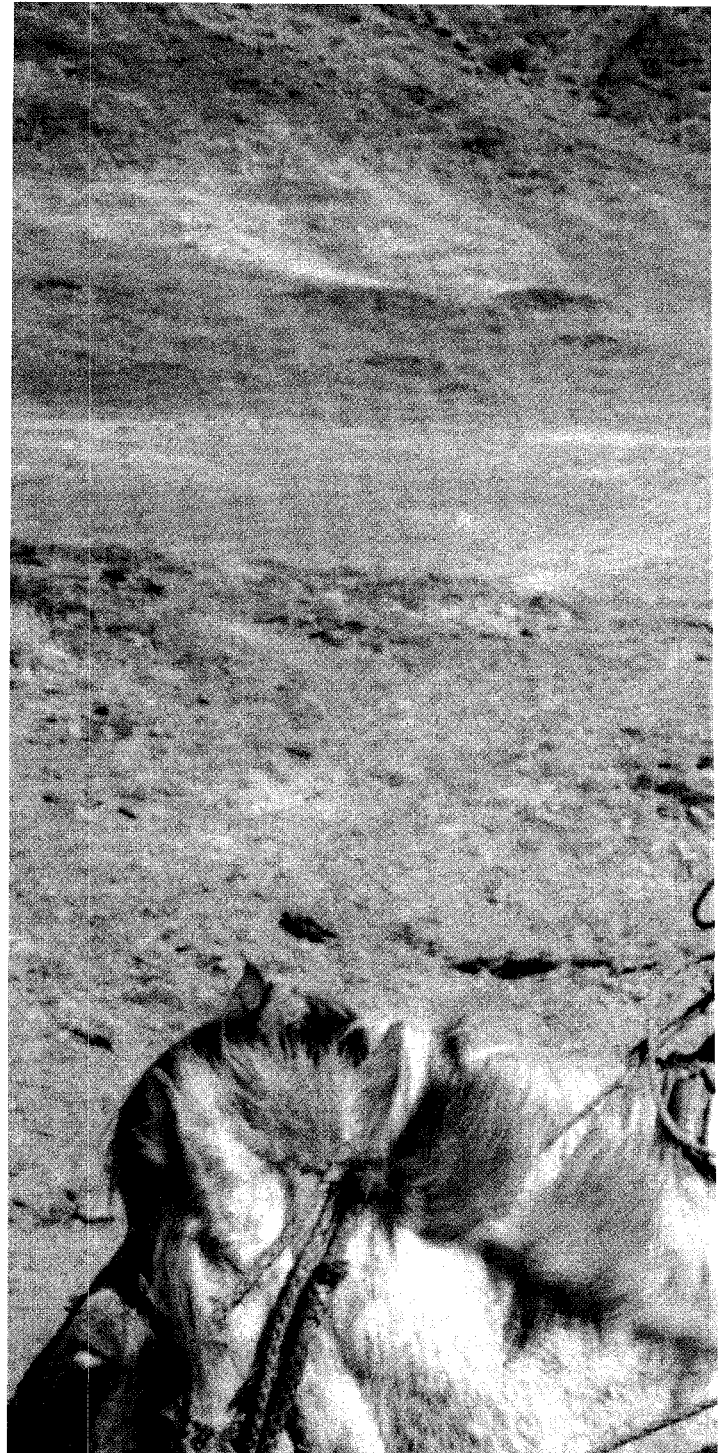
Wherever he is, the mission is everything for Tom Wilhelm. In his eyes, to avoid taking bureaucratic risks, or to shade the truth for the sake of a diplomatic advantage, is unmanly, the worst of offenses. "I'm the guy who gutted the [Department of Defense] environmental program for Mongolia, because it was unimplementable, and I didn't see what DOD was getting out of it," he told me almost as soon as we had met. One of Wilhelm's early moves in Ulan Bator was to scrap many existing military-assistance programs and replace them with new ones—including a humanitarian dental project in a key Mongolian-Chinese border area—that would support the three-pillars strategy. "I chose to come here and not to work at the JSTAFF [Joint Staff] at the Pentagon, because in Mongolia I knew that I could make a difference," Wilhelm told me. Even as a military officer he was a policymaker by another name.

I arranged to accompany Wilhelm on a nine-day trip along the Mongolian-Chinese border. On the day we left for the train station, Wilhelm wore a baseball cap, suspenders, and cargo pants. He had slipped Oriental prayer beads into one of his pockets for good luck, and had stuffed a battle dress uniform (or BDU, for "battle-dress utility") into his Army kit bag, for use at our upcoming meetings with Mongolian officers at the border.

The train station in Ulan Bator is a poured-concrete, neo-classical pile that for a Third World installation is surprisingly quiet and well organized. Our Russian-built train reeked of lignite; a female conductor, wearing a white mask against SARS, had a stove going for tea. Joining us in the compartment was our interpreter, Major Dabarch Altankhuu ("Golden Sun"). Altankhuu, dressed in jeans and a work shirt, was a young, stocky, clean-cut officer who had learned English at the Defense Language Institute in San Antonio, Texas.

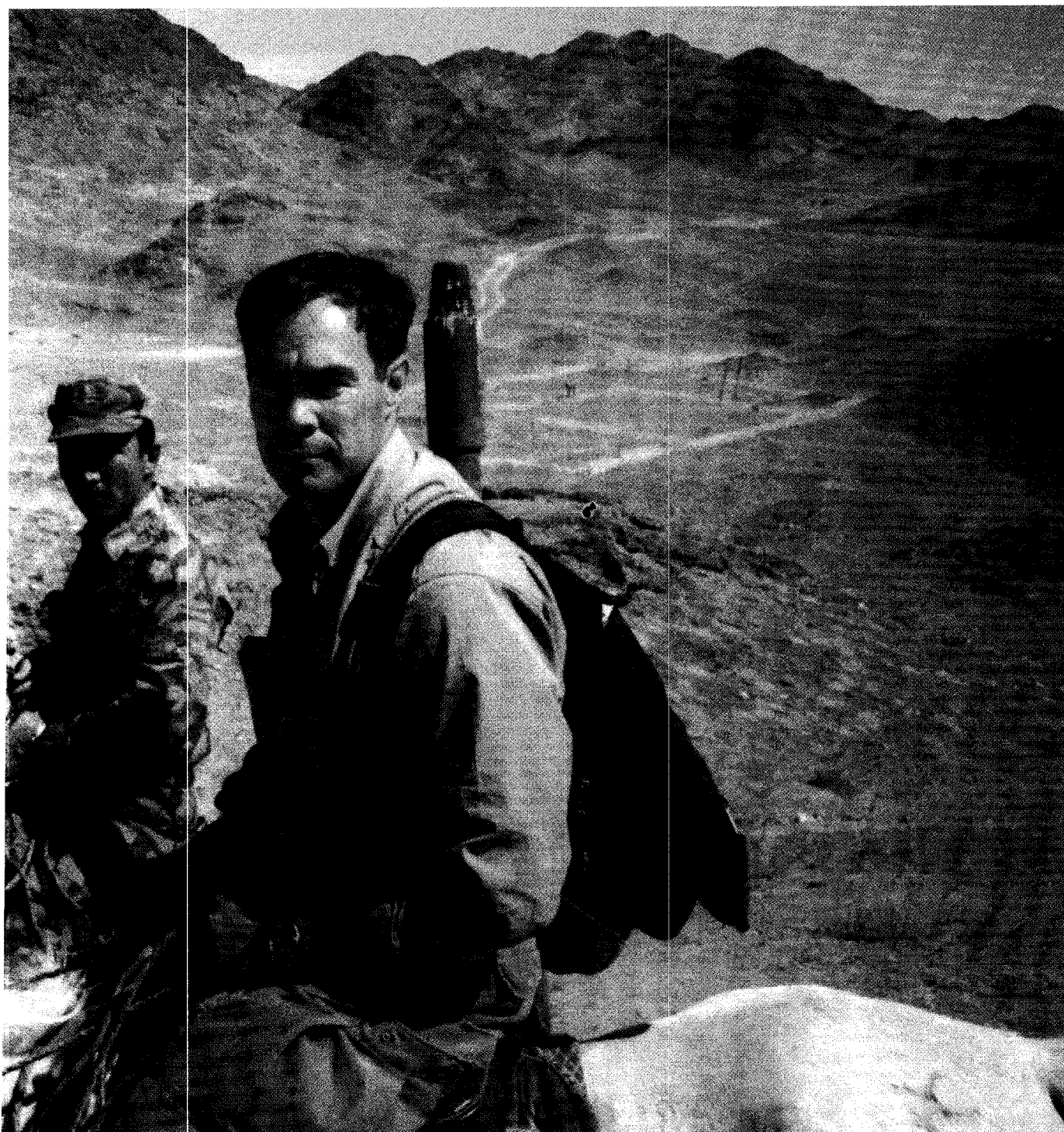
As the train slipped out of Ulan Bator, Wilhelm took from his rucksack some black Russian caviar, hard-boiled eggs, cheese, pickles, and a bottle of red wine, and we had ourselves a feast. He then proceeded to pump Altankhuu for information on the up-and-comers in the Mongolian military. Looking out the window as we left the last of the city's scrap-metal junkyards behind us, I saw in the distance bark-brown and tungsten-hued ridges streaked with snow.

Mongolia is a spectacular emptiness. Two and a quarter times the size of Texas, the country is home to only 2.7 million people—and nearly a million of them live in the capital.



Here geology matters more than civilization. Mongolia is dominated by a basinlike plateau, much of which lies from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level. Looming to the north are the Khangai Nuruu and Altai mountain ranges, with peaks rising to 14,000 feet. The climate is one of the world's most extreme: in Ulan Bator temperatures range from 100° in summer to -40° in winter.

Today's Mongolia, the former Outer Mongolia, has the elongated shape of a sheepskin. We were headed southeast—and downhill—from Ulan Bator, near the center of the country, into the warmer lowlands of the Gobi Desert, to Zamyn-



Uud, on the Chinese border, close to where Marco Polo passed in the thirteenth century, en route to China.

Soon not a tree or even a scrap of scrub was in sight—and no sign of habitation, not even a *ger*. But then, at sunset, we saw a signature image of Mongolia's nomadic spirit. Galloping across the hard-baked steppe was a lone horseman, who for a time kept up with our train. He stood upright in an unpadded wooden saddle, and wore a pointed fur cap. "It's like the Great Plains a hundred and fifty years ago!" Wilhelm exclaimed. Repeatedly during my time with him Wilhelm would refer to Mongolia as "Injun country"—an

analogy that in fact goes far in Mongolia. The Plains Indians are descended from the peoples who migrated from this part of north-central Asia, across the Bering Strait and down into North America. The Mongolian "long song" is echoed in the chants of the Sioux and the Apaches. Helping matters are the cowboy hats that Mongolians wear along with their traditional robes. "Injun Country" was a term I heard not only from Wilhelm but from U.S. Army officers in Yemen, Colombia, the Philippines, and Afghanistan over the past few months, describing the ungovernable parts of those nations. The choice of words was not accidental: whereas

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

American civilians tend to hark back to the struggles against slavery and fascism, in the Civil War and World War II, to find patriotic glory, the Army itself harks back to the Indian wars for its defining moments, especially now that it is engaged in the war on terrorism—a classic counter-insurgency against small clusters of combatants, as in the Wild West.

Later, when darkness reduced the world to the rumbling sound of the train, Wilhelm began to tell me his life story. As a young Army Ranger, in 1981, he was appointed platoon leader of an air-assault infantry unit in the 101st Airborne Division, stationed in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. These were the final days of the old Vietnam War Army. Robbery and drugs were still rife in the barracks. Disciplining soldiers was a big part of Wilhelm's job. In 1983 he was sent to helicopter flight school, at Fort Rucker, Alabama, and afterward served as a pilot and commanded an Arctic infantry company in the 172nd Infantry Brigade, based in Fairbanks, Alaska.

During his time in Alaska, Wilhelm patrolled the Aleutian Islands with Eskimo scouts, occasionally spotting signs of SPETSNAZ (Soviet special forces) units that infiltrated remote parts of Alaska—a little-known aspect of the Cold War. The Arctic demanded a unique set of infantry skills. "When the temperature is forty below," Wilhelm said, "you can't afford to break a sweat, because once you stop sweating, you'll turn into a Popsicle. You've got to stay dry, even when you're pulling a sled loaded down with gear. Therefore, everything has to be planned and carried out far more methodically than in temperate climates. It was the best job of my life." Wilhelm describes all of the jobs he's had in the Army that way.

Wilhelm spent much of his time in Tajikistan keeping up with the activities of a colorful cast of warlords, including Yakub Salimov, who played the theme song from *The Godfather* whenever he received guests at home.

In 1985 Wilhelm was sent to study at the Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College, in Kingston, Ontario—a bastion of British colonial tradition, where one wore a tie after six and was given a personal napkin ring for use at mess. "There was a lot of esprit," he told me. "Everything was deliberate, meticulous, with a fierce sense of a warrior ethic, despite the lack of opportunities Canada had to prove it. I get angry whenever someone belittles the Canadian military."

About this time Wilhelm decided to become an Army foreign-area officer for the Soviet Union and its environs. He took a Special Operations course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, underwent total immersion in Russian at the

Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, and got a graduate degree in Eastern European studies at the University of Kansas. Then, on his own initiative and with his own money (and with only a wink and a nod from the U.S. Army), Wilhelm applied and got accepted to Leningrad State University, where in the mid-1980s he slept in the dorms with Soviet students, and queued at neighborhood buffets for sticky rice, black bread, and sour milk.

Still not yet thirty, Wilhelm was acquiring a battery of specific skills—the Russian language, Arctic survival, helicopter piloting. And there was no letup.

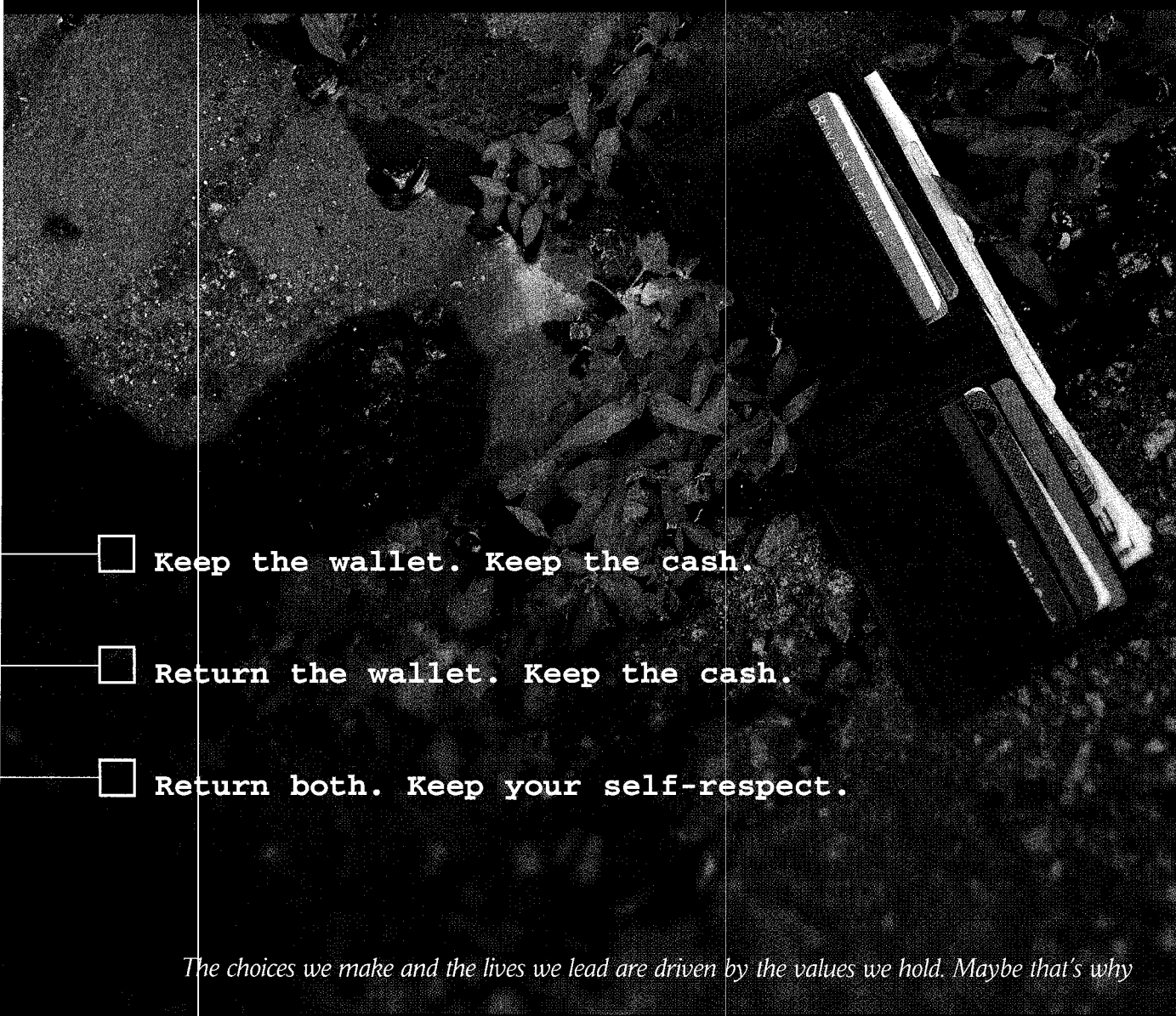
By the time the Berlin Wall came down, in 1989, Wilhelm was an Army captain stationed in Germany. The fall of communism changed his life. For the next decade he spent his time deployed in the former Eastern bloc and in war-torn Tajikistan, Macedonia, and Bosnia, where he developed experience, in active combat and in nonmilitary operations, that he never could have developed during the Cold War.

I went to sleep in the dark and rattling train compartment. When I awoke, to a full moon, it was dawn, and snow was glinting on the desert's wrinkles. Now we were in the real Gobi (Mongolian for "gravel-covered plain"). A Bactrian camel, hairy from the long winter, stood silhouetted at a lonely station platform. Wilhelm, playing with his prayer beads and adjusting his ball cap after a few hours of sleep, said, "Now, where would you rather be? Here, or stuck in traffic, staring at the car ahead on I-395, going to work at the Pentagon?"

Eventually we pulled into Zamyn-Uud. The station building was new, and sat like a stage prop against the gravel flatland. Waiting for us at the foot of the platform in the freezing morning were three Mongolian officers wearing dress greens, leather coats down to their ankles, and ridiculously large Soviet-style service caps, often known as "satellite dishes." The officers shunted us into a Russian-made jeep called a UAZ (pronounced *wahz*), an acronym for its Russian name.

Our hotel was two hundred yards farther along the railroad tracks, a poured-concrete blockhouse with hard beds, hideous furniture, and cracked windows. Wilhelm quickly changed into his BDU, adorned with Ranger and paratrooper insignia, and put on his new U.S. Army black beret. We all gathered in Wilhelm's room. Colonel D. Battsengel, the leader of the Mongolian delegation, ordered breakfast brought up: *buuz*, or mutton-ball dumplings in goulash; fatty cold cuts; and salty camel's-milk tea. We cleaned our plates.

"The American military will eat anything, anywhere, anytime," Wilhelm announced to our hosts. Major Altankhuu translated. (Though Wilhelm's Russian is fluent, his Mongolian is more rudimentary.) Everybody laughed. After asking the name of a Mongolian officer a second time, Wilhelm, apologizing, said, "I always ask for a name twice. When I remembered a woman's name the first time, I knew she

- 
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would be my wife." Laughter again. Wilhelm's friendly banter and broad smile never faltered.

After small talk about wrestling and martial arts, Colonel Battsengel told us he was from northeastern Mongolia, where Genghis Khan was born and probably is buried. Formally welcoming us to East Gobi Province, Battsengel said that the tempo of development there was about to pick up dramatically, with the establishment of an economic free-trade zone, manufacturing plants, and a Chinese casino on the border. The population of Zamyn-Uud, he said, would soon increase from 10,000 to 30,000. The Chinese were pushing hard to establish casino gambling in Mongolia, an enterprise that favored their business acumen and organizational skills.

The Chinese had other plans, too. They had their sights on the mineral deposits in the Gobi Desert. They also wanted to start large-scale animal-husbandry operations elsewhere in southern and eastern Mongolia, which would have the unintended effect of ruining the earth's last great uninhabited steppe. And they wanted to build a modern road network from Inner Mongolia into the Gobi. Meanwhile, northern Mongolia was being deforested. Every other freight train we saw was filled with logs headed for China.

Despite seven decades of virtual Soviet occupation,

THE DIAMOND CUTTER

Through the loupe or peepstone it's there: a mini-dot of air
and, when light shines through
the object, the gletz is visible, via microscope, x-ray scope.
It's a flaw, diminishing
an object: when light,
unimpeded,
passes through it,
the object's brilliance
is most brilliant. A gletz affects
clarity, affects merit.
It's best if no gletz can be found at all.
The gletz's place matters—higher up: bad news,
lower: less-bad news.
They indicate fragility,
these breathless, cell-sized cells
where two inmates are locked
and each has a knife.

—THOMAS LUX

Thomas Lux's new book, The Cradle Place, in which this poem appears, will be published this month.

Mongolians are less afraid of the Russians than of the Chinese. Russia's empire is disintegrating; China's is rising. The Chinese are migrating in large numbers into adjacent Russian Siberia. We could see the Chinese border post from our hotel: a brightly lit, well-engineered arc, symbolizing the Sino-industrial encroachment on Zamyn-Uud's sprawl of felt tents and scrap-iron huts.

"In my blood I don't like the Chinese," a high-ranking Mongolian official declared in an interview I conducted in Ulan Bator. "China is not interested in developing Mongolia's economy, but in exploiting our natural resources. The Russians dominated our politics for seven decades but did not incorporate us into the Soviet Union. The Chinese have the possibility to utterly absorb us."

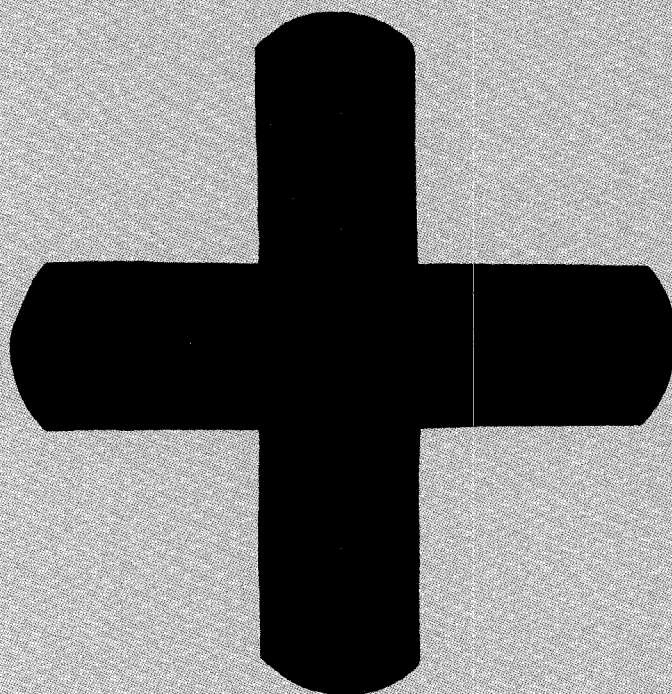
Greater than the fear of a strong and expansionist China, however, is the fear of an internally weak China, or even a fragmented China. A weakened China, along with continued instability in the neighboring, formerly Soviet Turkic republics and in the North Caucasus, would spell trouble for Mongolia. It conjures up the prospect of Central Asian terrorism and drug trafficking, spearheaded by Uighur and Chechen militants and organized criminals.

Colonel Battsengel drove us beyond the last border checkpoint. Here, in no-man's-land, only a post marked the frontier. A Chinese officer a few feet on the other side of the post watched silently as Colonel Wilhelm, in his BDU and black beret, went right up to it, careful not to step beyond for fear of provoking a diplomatic incident. Cameras clicked at our party from a window on the Chinese side.

It was a border that mattered, and soon will matter more. If we look beyond the present conflagrations in the Middle East, China looms as the greatest challenge to American power.

We returned to Zamyn-Uud. In a nondescript house we found a long line of Mongolians in traditional robes, waiting in a hallway. Many were children accompanied by their parents, who wore hopeful expressions. In an adjacent room U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant Dan Elliot, of Huntington Beach, California, greeted us. He was the chief of a four-person dental mission dispatched to this part of the Mongolian-Chinese border by PACOM. By treating an average of a hundred patients daily in this and nearby border towns, Elliot and his colleagues were demonstrating the local benefits of American self-interest.

Sergeant Elliot briefed Colonel Wilhelm. "The goal here, sir," he said, "is load-light, low-tech, small footprint." He meant that here in the Gobi more good could be done by traveling with minimal equipment; using the most basic technology, which is least compromised by power outages; and keeping the mission as unobtrusive as possible. "We stay low-key and crank out patients, sir," he added, pointing out the cheap hardware lamps for illuminating patients' mouths, and the locally bought gas burners for hot-water



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sterilization. The dental chairs came from nearby shops and offices. The team had advertised its services to the community on the local radio station. All the equipment fit into six small trunks, including presents for the kids treated along the way. It was like battlefield surgery.

The impressive thing about the high-tech American military is that it knows when to be low-tech, and how to be good at it, the same way that guerrilla fighters do. Each war, each training mission, each deployment, brings with it new lessons that have little to do with technology. And because America under all its post-Cold War Presidents has been militarily active overseas, its armed services are improving tactically with every passing day.

It was dawn, and the snow was glinting on the desert's wrinkles. Now we were in the real Gobi. Wilhelm, after a few hours of sleep, said, "Now, where would you rather be? Here, or stuck in traffic on I-395, going to work at the Pentagon?"

Wilhelm complimented Elliot and the rest of the team—members of America's superb cadre of noncommissioned officers—on their good work. As we were leaving, Wilhelm said, "Noncoms are the secret of the American military's success, and it can be openly acknowledged, because few can copy it. It's a reflection of America's relative social equality."

Later, after a lunch of camel's milk, greasy mutton, and horsemeat in Colonel Battengel's office, we piled into our UAZ and continued along the border, inside no-man's-land. The terrain was flat, featureless, gravel-strewn, and utterly disorienting. It all looked the same—and yet it was here that I got my first intimation of the abundance of wildlife in the Gobi. We saw swarms of finches, ruddy drakes, and black-tailed gazelles, the latter of which we chased down, barely catching them at 45 miles per hour. On a one-foot rise not far from us—the highest point in this flat emptiness—we saw a golden eagle about two feet tall. Next we came upon herds of goats, horses, and Bactrian camels, guarded by a few Mongolian border police. The goats, enclosed in a corral made of piled sheep dung, were a source of food; the horses and camels were used for patrolling.

Near the corral was a *ger* inhabited by a family of nomads, who invited us inside for camel's milk and homemade vodka. We were careful not to step on the door sill as we entered; doing so is said to bring bad luck, and was a crime punishable by death in Genghis Khan's time. Continuing with the prescribed etiquette, we walked to the left, or clockwise,

around the side of the tent to the back, the place for honored guests. This made sense, because the kitchen—a few pots on a stove fueled by dried dung—lay off to the right of the door. From the center of the roof, which was partly open to the sky, hung a ceremonial blue scarf. Spokes radiated from the center of the roof frame, representing the wheel of life. An altar behind us, fragrant with juniper incense, included a small carpet with a portrait of Genghis.

"I'm culturally at home," Wilhelm announced to the gathering. He sprinkled vodka in the air three times, in Mongolian fashion, before swallowing a small glassful. "I'm in the Gobi, among Mongolians, and among soldiers." The statement, like so many others he made, endeared him to our hosts.

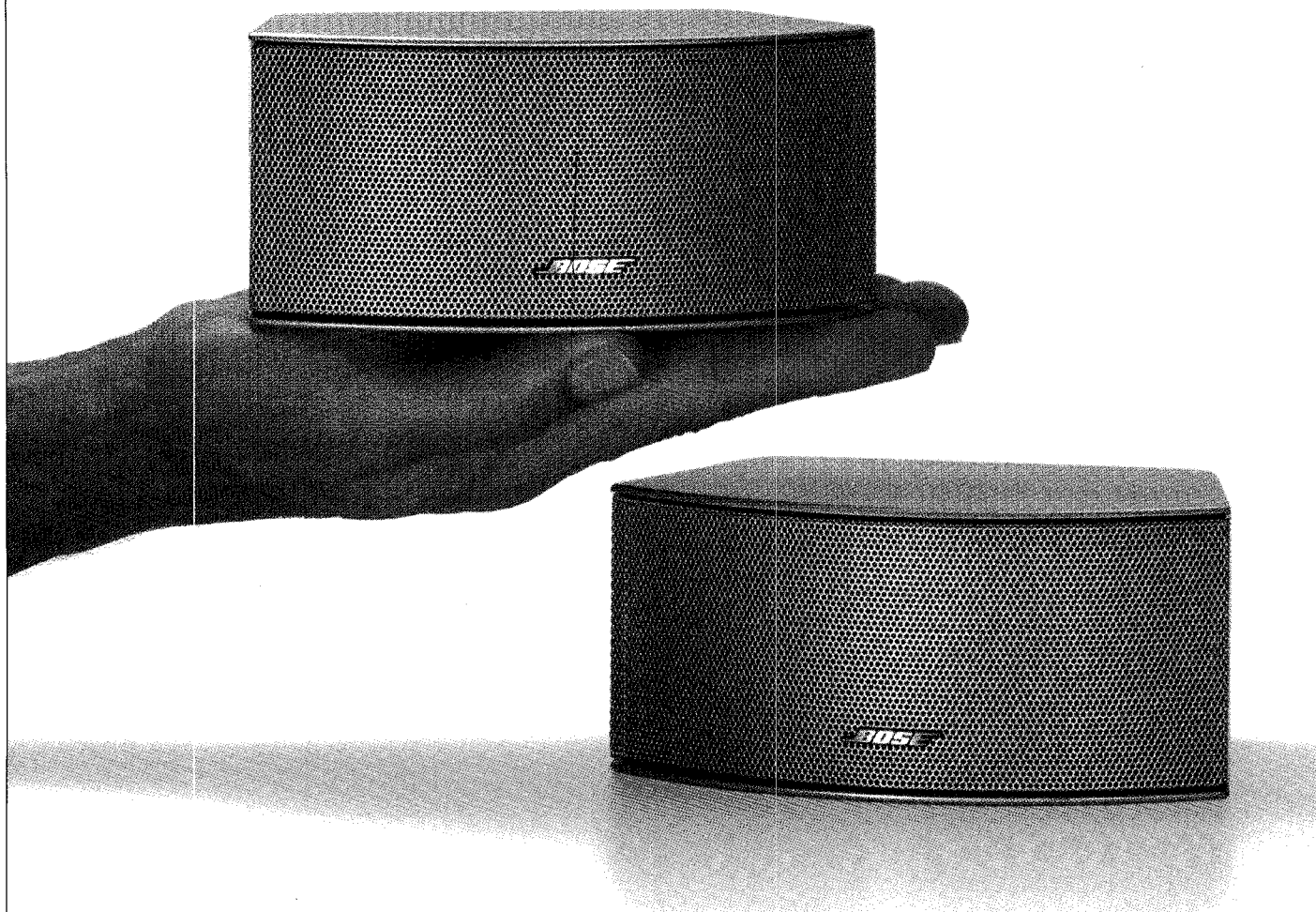
The next morning, back in Zamyn-Uud, we woke to rain and freezing cold. The day before, we had driven on well-worn desert tracks made by other UAZs. Now, headed on a lengthier excursion along the border, we left them behind. Here the Gobi was a vast ocean of stubble fields so bumpy that my head was constantly banging against the roof. After an hour we came to a Mongolian border fort, or *zastaf*: a few single-story barracks with distempered white walls and lead-green roofs.

A young soldier wearing a fur hat and a greatcoat, with signs of frostbite on his cheeks, saluted smartly as we entered. Then came the dress parade, with a dozen or so soldiers, a few officers and their wives and children, and the post dog all standing at attention for review. It was like a frontier fort of the Old West. This was not merely a military base but a small community in the wilderness. Protecting a remote borderland is seen in Mongolia as a vocation, a way of life. Such an outpost would not be considered complete without at least some women and children.

In a bare and icy room the officers' wives served us tea mixed with salt, mutton fat, and camel's milk. Wilhelm took notes as the officers complained about how the cold weather shortened battery life for their Kenwood walkie-talkies, about the shortages of spare parts and diesel fuel, and about how their solar panels didn't work in bad weather. Wilhelm said he would try to get them new radios. In place of solar panels he suggested wind generators.

The barracks were lined with maps and shamanistic designs. The border guards used old-model Kalashnikovs, with wooden stocks rather than collapsible metal ones. Outside, about eighty horses stood stoically in the sleet; the afternoon desert sky was dark and dreary. A network of concrete trenches and pillboxes indicated the closeness of the Chinese border. In Ulan Bator, Major General Purev Dash, the chief of staff and deputy commander of the border forces, had told me that his men used camels and horses for patrols "not because we are poor and primitive but because such animals offer the surest means to scout the desert." Wilhelm's plan for policing the border was a mobile force that would mix fast ponies and Bactrian camels with light, high-tech communications gear.

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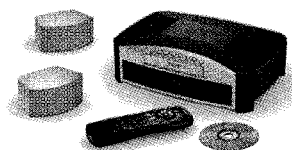


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Driving back to Zamyn-Uud, Wilhelm talked about his experiences in northeastern Macedonia, in 1995, when U.S. and various Nordic units were patrolling the border with Serbia.

"I was a major; my bosses called me an 'iron major,'" he said, referring to the middle managers so crucial to the U.S. military's operations in the post-Cold War world. "I had a damn great job. I was the second-in-command on the ground of what was the Super Bowl of American military operations at that time. 'We're in a war zone'—what all soldiers live for. There were American generals saying the Balkans were a waste of time, that we should have been doing Bradley-combat-vehicle exercises in Germany instead. What a bunch of crap! Finally, we're actually using our training, and these Cold War dinosaur generals want us to train for a war that would never happen. I'll bet you the re-enlistment rate for the soldiers who served in the Balkans was greater than that of those who stayed in Germany. The Balkan deployments were the best thing for the morale of U.S. soldiers at the time. And they paved the way for how we fight now."

The impressive thing about the high-tech American military is that it knows when to be low-tech, and how to be good at it. Each war, each training mission, each deployment, brings with it new lessons that have little to do with technology.

Wilhelm's men monitored the smuggling of fuel across the unmarked Serbian-Macedonian border. They tracked Serb patrols. They learned to integrate themselves with the Finns, who were part of the Nordic battalion but not part of NATO. They patrolled in full kit several times a day. "We were defining real peacekeeping," Wilhelm said, "which is like war-making, since you monopolize the use of force in a given area. It was paradise after Germany. Somalia was over. Bosnia for us hadn't started yet. Macedonia was the only game in town. Majors and master sergeants were defining national policy at the fingertip level."

The full flowering of the middle ranks had its roots in the social transformation of the American military, which, according to Wilhelm (a liberal who voted for Al Gore in 2000), had taken place a decade earlier, when the rise of Christian evangelicalism had helped stop the indiscipline of the Vietnam-era Army. "This zeal reformed behavior, empowered junior leaders, and demanded better recruits," he said. "For one thing, drinking stopped, and that killed off the officers' clubs, which, in turn, broke down more barriers between officers and noncoms, giving the noncoms the

confidence to do what majors and colonels in other armies do. The Christian fundamentalism was the hidden hand that changed the military for the better. Though you try to get someone to admit it! We never could have pulled off Macedonia or Bosnia with the old Vietnam Army."

On December 14, 1995, Wilhelm, who hadn't seen his family for the better part of a year, was on leave in Peoria, Illinois. He had just finished cutting down a Christmas tree with his father-in-law when he saw on television that the Dayton Peace Accord had been signed. He was summoned the next day to the Balkans by Major General William Nash, who was about to assume command of Task Force Eagle, with responsibility for the northeast sector of Bosnia.

"Bosnia was a cold, muddy place," he said, "and the people were cold and muddy too. There wasn't much brotherly love. They had just shot the hell out of each other, and were living in the rubble they made for themselves. They seemed tired, though. Their morale was low. And that was all good news. Those were things we could exploit."

Wilhelm got wind that the diplomats had worked out a deal for the Russians to join the peacekeeping force. The Russians would be subordinate to Major General Nash, who assigned Wilhelm the role of integrating them with the NATO peacekeepers. "The reason you're here, corporal," Nash told Wilhelm (then a major), "is to keep the Russians out of trouble." Nash had meant the word "corporal" as a generic term for all lower- and middle-ranking officers. "Nash had given me a one-sentence mission," Wilhelm told me, "which implied that he trusted me to figure the rest out. He knew that I knew that the Russians were professional and well disciplined, and would work well within the brigade. My job was to incorporate them into this complex, fast-moving machine of ours, and to protect them from our own media, which were constantly looking for mistakes."

The next morning, in Zamyn-Uud, Colonel Battsengel introduced us to Colonel Ranjinnyam, a bearish, scruffy, and friendly-looking man who would be our guide on a northeasterly journey along the Chinese border, into an area where Mongolia sticks out into Manchuria. Ranjinnyam's UAZ followed ours until we had driven a few miles beyond Zamyn-Uud. Then we got out and, in the middle of the desert, toasted farewell to Battsengel with a few glasses of Absolut—the only good vodka we had on the trip. We then piled into Ranjinnyam's UAZ and set out over a tableland of sagebrush and tumbleweed. The landscape kept shifting. We drove past small glaciers and glistening streams; past horizonless uplands of igneous rock; past vast dirt expanses that gradually shed their green stubble. By dusk we could see nothing but sand.

We stopped for the night at Ulan Uul (Red Rock), a regiment-size encampment for the border force. Wilhelm and I shared a small, icy room, where he continued his reminiscences of Bosnia.

"The Russians were in Uglevik, Republika Srpska," he said, "to patrol their sector for the U.S.-led division. They had American brigades on either side of them. Again, there was no doctrine for this. Daily patrols were the guts of the Dayton agreement, and I went on a lot of patrols with the Russians, enduring their combat rations of tinned fish and buckwheat.

"We went to one village where the church had been destroyed and the Serbs had their headquarters on the wrong side of the street. They had had twenty days to move it to the right side of the street, as stipulated by Dayton, and they hadn't. I took out the copy of Dayton that I carried around with me, and read it out loud. The Russian lieutenant with me repeated it to the Serbs. I told the Serbs we would bomb their headquarters with an Apache if they didn't move it. I called in an Apache to do a flyover. The Serbs were in disbelief that they couldn't drive a wedge between us and the Russians. 'Let's go now,' my Russian companion told me. 'Let's give them their own space to absorb the bad news.' An American would have stayed and drunk tea with the Serbs. But the Russians live more in an ambiguous world of negotiations without rules, especially because of their experience with civil wars in the Caucasus and Central Asia. They have a better sense of these things.

"My Russian lieutenant and I seized weapons that were hidden in haystacks. We destroyed anti-aircraft guns mounted on trucks. We called in Apache missions. The Serbs began calling me 'Mean Mr. Tom' because I kept threatening them with Apaches if they didn't abide by Dayton, by disarming and dismantling their checkpoints. I've logged more hours in a Russian ACV [armored combat vehicle] than in an American one over my lifetime. I was taken in and accepted by a brotherhood that had seen exceptional combat in Chechnya and Afghanistan, and listened to them bitch about lousy chains of command and problems in Russia.

"Many national armies in Europe wouldn't fight when push comes to shove. I've seen them corrupted by too much UN work and not enough real combat. But hell, the Russians would fight! Nothing about the American military in Bosnia impressed the Russians so much as our sergeants' whipping out GPS [Global Positioning System] devices—which the Russians didn't have—and calling in Apache strikes. Through us, the Russians learned the real power of technology, not the false power of it."

The real power of technology, Wilhelm went on to explain, is that it provides an objectivity that even an enemy trusts. It has a calming effect. Because of the GPS devices the Americans were using in Bosnia, for example, there were no arguments about whether this or that outpost was on the wrong side of the cease-fire line.

The false power of technology, Wilhelm believes, was exemplified in the Cold War nuclear chains of command, which were elaborate theoretical constructs never intended to be put into actual use. "The Cold War wrought a whole

bureaucratic culture that had no battlefield reality," he said. "The Cold War armies were not great armies, because all the decisions were made by generals and politicians. In great armies the job of generals is to back up their sergeants. That's just my opinion, but I know I'm right."

In the Russian military calling in an air strike is a decision that no one below a colonel can make. Yet in Wilhelm's opinion, the Russians have mid-level officers almost as good as those in the U.S. military: the result of combat experience in complex environments like Transdniestria, Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Tajikistan. And because their empire is collapsing, the Russian military today frequently finds itself in combat situations that encourage reform at the lower and middle levels. "I would have followed Colonel [Alexander] Lentsov into combat anywhere," Wilhelm said, referring to his Russian commander in Bosnia. "On a tactical level we have more in common with the Russians than with a lot of our allies." And yet the general staff in Moscow remains locked in a Cold War mindset.

In the spring of 1996 Wilhelm left Bosnia. By the fall he was in Tajikistan.

The day after leaving Zamy-Uud we entered a landscape of perfectly rolling hills speckled with scree and yellow stubble. Between the blackest shadows, grazing in an ethereal light, was a herd of exceedingly rare bighorn argali, or "Marco Polo" sheep. They were almost as large as horses. Wilhelm was ecstatic. "All we need now is to see a snow leopard," he said. In our UAZ we followed the sheep to the edge of a range of clay hills, where below us the great Mongolian plain fell away into the sky.

That day Wilhelm and I had to endure large meals at six *zastafs*, with vodka toasts at every one. This was in addition to drinking the blood of a black-tailed gazelle that Colonel Ranjinnyam had shot with his Makarov pistol from the UAZ. Having swallowed a glass of blood and eaten the animal's testicles and eyeballs, Wilhelm turned to me. "Like I said," he announced, "this is better than rush-hour traffic on 395 en route to the Pentagon." He never tired, never stopped laughing and slapping his fellow officers on the back. Major Altankhuu confided to me at one point, "Colonel Wilhelm is a great man. He makes us like America so much."

Later I asked Wilhelm to tell me more about his past, this time about his posting to Tajikistan. It began in October of 1996, when he became America's first defense attaché to the country, which was then a newly independent post-Soviet republic in which a four-year civil war was finally beginning to wind down. In neighboring Afghanistan the ethnic-Pashtun Taliban had just captured Kabul. Central Asian leaders, not to mention Russia and the Shiite clergy of Iran, were fearful that the Taliban, aided by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, would now try to spread their brand of Sunni fundamentalism throughout the region. They were therefore trying to negotiate an end to the civil war, be-

cause Tajikistan was now needed as a rear base to help the ethnic-Tajik guerrilla leader Ahmad Shah Massoud recapture Afghanistan.

Wilhelm spent much of his time in Tajikistan keeping up with the activities of a colorful cast of warlords: Rakhmon "Hitler" Sanginov, Jagga "the Sweeper" Mirzoyiev, Mahmud "the Black Robin Hood" Khudoberdiev, Abdumalik "the Shark" Abdullojonov, Khurshed "Tyson" Abdushukurov, and Yakub Salimov, who played the theme song from *The Godfather* whenever he received guests at his home. Wilhelm did see combat, however. Three times he attended the "final" fall of the town of Tursunzade, near the border with Uzbekistan, once lying in a ditch during a vicious firefight. The victorious army had a handful of T-72 tanks with stereo speakers blasting Jimmy Buffett's "Last Mango in Paris." That, Wilhelm told me, was "postmodern war, or whatever you want to call it."

Wilhelm's wife, Cheri, and their two young children, Parker and Daley Alice, had come with him to Tajikistan. "I had been separated from them for so long," he said, "because of the deployment in Bosnia and other assignments. We were all finally together in a war zone. There was no electricity, no heating; it was so cold we all slept together in the same bed to keep warm. The tap water was the color of Coca-Cola. We shared a toilet with our armed guards. I went boar hunting occasionally. It was the greatest time of our lives."

As the war ended, a spree of Western-hostage taking began. The Wilhelms were evacuated two times. During one of the evacuations Wilhelm was sent to Tampa, Florida, the headquarters of Central Command, which was about to incorporate the formerly Soviet Central Asian republics into its domain. Wilhelm was summoned to meet the CENTCOM commander-in-chief, Marine General Anthony Zinni.

"I found Zinni in the weight room," he said, "pumping iron. *A typical Marine general*, I thought. He had only one question for me: the big one. Given that I was a force-protection risk (after all, my family and I had to be evacuated), what was I doing in Tajikistan in the first place that made me so necessary there? I told him that I was mapping out the personalities of the Northern Alliance, next door in Afghanistan, and that I was the only observer on the ground in a major civil war transforming the Russian military. 'Fine,' he told me. 'Go back to Tajikistan then.' That's a good general. If he gets the right answer to the right question, he's finished with you. He trusts you to figure out the rest."

Colonel Ranjinnyam accompanied us in his UAZ for the long drive to the town of Choir, in central Mongolia, southeast of Ulan Bator. Outside Choir was a deserted Soviet air base that Wilhelm wanted to inspect, with an eye toward its future use by the United States.

The air base was home to a two-mile runway that needed

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only modest repairs and could handle any kind of fixed-wing aircraft in the U.S. arsenal. Beside it was a long line of hardened aircraft shelters: reinforced-concrete bunkers in the shape of semi-pyramids, designed to protect fighter jets from aerial bombardment. A gigantic sign proclaimed, PRAISE TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE. The base had been built in the 1970s, a consequence of the Sino-Soviet split a few years earlier. It constituted a forward front for the Soviet Union in a possible conflict with China. Choir itself was nothing but a series of skull-like concrete tenements surrounded by steppe. A building complex that once housed 1,850 members of the Soviet military and their families—and had once included a theater and shops—had been stripped of all its windows, window frames, and heating pipes. “It used to be so lively,” Altankhuu said. “It was the place where all Mongols wanted to go in the evening.”

One might wonder why the United States would ever need an air base in Mongolia. In the 1990s Wilhelm wondered the same thing about Tajikistan. Then came September 11, 2001, and suddenly back-of-beyond Tajikistan, with its southern border facing Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, became a crucial staging area for American operations. “That’s when I learned never to say ‘never,’” he told me. With Mongolia’s eastern border only 500 miles from North Korea, and with the strategic environment unpredictable and fast-changing, an air base here could be an important asset.

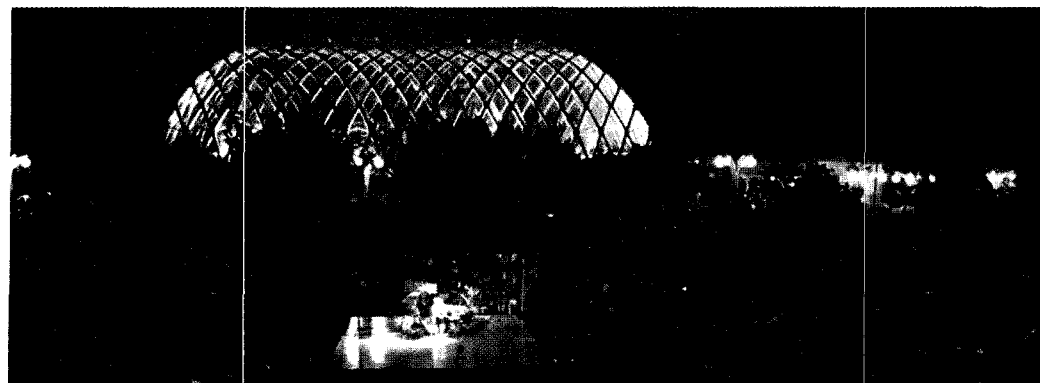
Nobody was thinking of transforming Choir into an American base, the way it had once been a Soviet one. Rather, for a relatively small amount of money the runway and a building or two might be repaired and kept up, so that American planes and Air Force personnel could use them at any time. Given the political instability throughout Central Asia, the Pentagon was intrigued by a Eurasian “footprint” strategy, in which the U.S. would have basing options everywhere without a significant troop and hardware presence anywhere.

Overlooking a field of broken glass, where the last tenement block met the flat and empty Gobi, was a gargantuan concrete statue of a generic Soviet commissar, fashioned in the sneering, aggressive image of Lenin. The statue had begun to flake and crumble, but its size and substance meant that it might well be around forever, like the abandoned statue in Shelley’s “Ozymandias.” It brought to mind ideas not just of brutality and domination but also of cheapness. “Everything the Soviets built looks like it was constructed by a high school shop class,” Wilhelm said, laughing.

“We should be careful of our own ambitions,” I said. “We don’t want to end up like the Soviets.”

“There is nothing we need to build here,” he answered, “except relationships.” ■

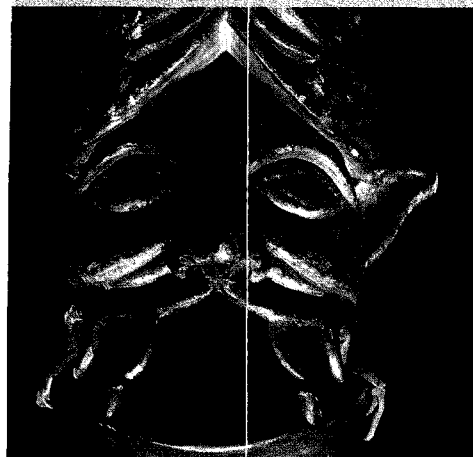
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THE ARMAGEDDON PLAN

During the Reagan era Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld were key players in a clandestine program designed to set aside the legal lines of succession and immediately install a new "President" in the event that a nuclear attack killed the country's leaders. The program helps explain the behavior of the Bush Administration on and after 9/11

BY JAMES MANN

Illustrations by Steve Brodner

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At least once a year during the 1980s Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld vanished. Cheney was working diligently on Capitol Hill, as a congressman rising through the ranks of the Republican leadership. Rumsfeld, who had served as Gerald Ford's Secretary of Defense, was a hard-driving business executive in the Chicago area—where, as the head of G. D. Searle & Co., he dedicated time and energy to the success of such commercial products as Nutra-Sweet, Equal, and Metamucil. Yet for periods of three or four days at a time no one in Congress knew where Cheney was, nor could anyone at Searle locate Rumsfeld. Even their wives were in the dark; they were handed only a mysterious Washington phone number to use in case of emergency.

After leaving their day jobs Cheney and Rumsfeld usually made their way to Andrews Air Force Base, outside Washington. From there, in the middle of the night, each man—joined by a team of forty to sixty federal officials and one member of Ronald Reagan's Cabinet—slipped away to some remote location in the United States, such as a disused military base or an underground bunker. A convoy of lead-lined trucks carrying sophisticated communications equipment and other gear would head to each of the locations.

Rumsfeld and Cheney were principal actors in one of the most highly classified programs of the Reagan Administration. Under it U.S. officials furtively carried out detailed planning exercises for keeping the federal government running during and after a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. The program called for setting



aside the legal rules for presidential succession in some circumstances, in favor of a secret procedure for putting in place a new "President" and his staff. The idea was to concentrate on speed, to preserve "continuity of government," and to avoid cumbersome procedures; the speaker of the House, the president pro tempore of the Senate, and the rest of Congress would play a greatly diminished role.

The inspiration for this program came from within the Administration itself, not from Cheney or Rumsfeld; except for a brief stint Rumsfeld served as Middle East envoy, neither

of them ever held office in the Reagan Administration. Nevertheless, they were leading figures in the program.

A few details about the effort have come to light over the years, but nothing about the way it worked or the central roles played by Cheney and Rumsfeld. The program is of particular interest today because it helps to explain the thinking and behavior of the second Bush Administration in the hours, days, and months after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Vice President Cheney urged President Bush to stay out of Washington for the rest of that day; Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld ordered his deputy Paul Wolfowitz to get out of town; Cheney himself began to

move from Washington to a series of "undisclosed locations"; and other federal officials were later sent to work outside the capital, to ensure the continuity of government in case of further attacks. All these actions had their roots in the Reagan Administration's clandestine planning exercises.

James Mann, former Washington correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, is senior writer-in-residence at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in Washington, D.C. This article is adapted from his book Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet, to be published this month.

The U.S. government considered the possibility of a nuclear war with the Soviet Union more seriously during the early Reagan years than at any other time since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Reagan had spoken in his 1980 campaign about the need for civil-defense programs to help the United States survive a nuclear exchange, and once in office he not only moved to boost civil defense but also approved a new defense-policy document that included plans for waging a protracted nuclear war against the Soviet Union. The exercises in which Cheney and

Soviet Union. What if a nuclear attack killed both the President and the Vice President, and maybe the speaker of the House, too? Who would run the country if it was too hard to track down the next living person in line under the Succession Act? What civilian leader could immediately give U.S. military commanders the orders to respond to an attack, and how would that leader communicate with the military? In a continuing nuclear exchange, who would have the authority to reach an agreement with the Soviet leadership to bring the war to an end?

Under nuclear attack three teams of officials, each including a Cabinet member prepared to be “President,” would be sent to different locations. Some of these officials might have become figureheads for Cheney or Rumsfeld.

Rumsfeld participated were a hidden component of these more public efforts to prepare for nuclear war.

The premise of the secret exercises was that in case of a nuclear attack on Washington, the United States needed to act swiftly to avoid “decapitation”—that is, a break in civilian leadership. A core element of the Reagan Administration’s strategy for fighting a nuclear war would be to decapitate the Soviet leadership by striking at top political and military officials and their communications lines; the Administration wanted to make sure that the Soviets couldn’t do to America what U.S. nuclear strategists were planning to do to the Soviet Union.

Under the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations the U.S. government had built large underground installations at Mount Weather, in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains, and near Camp David, along the Pennsylvania-Maryland border, each of which could serve as a military command post for the President in time of war. Yet a crucial problem remained: what might happen if the President couldn’t make it to one of those bunkers in time.

The Constitution makes the Vice President the successor if the President dies or is incapacitated, but it establishes no order of succession beyond that. Federal law, most recently the Presidential Succession Act of 1947, establishes further details. If the Vice President dies or cannot serve, then the speaker of the House of Representatives becomes President. After him in the line of succession come the president pro tempore of the Senate (typically the longest-serving member of the majority party) and then the members of the Cabinet, in the order in which their posts were created—starting with the Secretary of State and moving to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, and so on. The Reagan Administration, however, worried that this procedure might not meet the split-second needs of an all-out war with the

The outline of the plan was simple. Once the United States was (or believed itself about to be) under nuclear attack, three teams would be sent from Washington to three different locations around the United States. Each team would be prepared to assume leadership of the country, and would include a Cabinet member who was prepared to become

President. If the Soviet Union were somehow to locate one of the teams and hit it with a nuclear weapon, the second team or, if necessary, the third could take over.

This was not some abstract textbook plan; it was practiced in concrete and elaborate detail. Each team was named for a color—“red” or “blue,” for example—and each had an experienced executive who could operate as a new White House chief of staff. The obvious candidates were people who had served at high levels in the executive branch, preferably with the national-security apparatus. Cheney and Rumsfeld had each served as White House chief of staff in the Ford Administration. Other team leaders over the years included James Woolsey, later the director of the CIA, and Kenneth Duberstein, who served for a time as Reagan’s actual White House chief of staff.

As for the Cabinet members on each team, some had little experience in national security; at various times, for example, participants in the secret exercises included John Block, Reagan’s first Secretary of Agriculture, and Malcolm Baldrige, the Secretary of Commerce. What counted was not experience in foreign policy but, rather, that the Cabinet member was available. It seems fair to conclude that some of these “Presidents” would have been mere figureheads for a more experienced chief of staff, such as Cheney or Rumsfeld. Still, the Cabinet members were the ones who would issue orders, or in whose name the orders would be issued.

One of the questions studied in these exercises was what concrete steps a team might take to establish its credibility. What might be done to demonstrate to the American public, to U.S. allies, and to the Soviet leadership that “President” John Block or “President” Malcolm Baldrige was now running the country, and that he should be treated as the legitimate leader of the United States? One option was

to have the new “President” order an American submarine up from the depths to the surface of the ocean—since the power to surface a submarine would be a clear sign that he was now in full control of U.S. military forces. This standard—control of the military—is one of the tests the U.S. government uses in deciding whether to deal with a foreign leader after a coup d’état.

“One of the awkward questions we faced,” one participant in the planning of the program explains, “was whether to reconstitute Congress after a nuclear attack. It was decided that no, it would be easier to operate without them.” For one thing, it was felt that reconvening Congress, and replacing members who had been killed, would take too long. Moreover, if Congress did reconvene, it might elect a new speaker of the House, whose claim to the presidency might have greater legitimacy than that of a Secretary of Agriculture or Commerce who had been set up as President under Reagan’s secret program. The election of a new House speaker would not only take time but also create the potential for confusion. The Reagan Administration’s primary goal was to set up a chain of command that could respond to the urgent minute-by-minute demands of a nuclear war, when there might be no time to swear in a new President under the regular process of succession, and when a new President would not have the time to appoint a new staff. The Administration, however, chose to establish this process

without going to Congress for the legislation that would have given it constitutional legitimacy.

Ronald Reagan established the continuity-of-government program with a secret executive order. According to Robert McFarlane, who served for a time as Reagan’s National Security Adviser, the President himself made the final decision about who would head each of the three teams. Within Reagan’s National Security Council the “action officer” for the secret program was Oliver North, later the central figure in the Iran-contra scandal. Vice President George H.W. Bush was given the authority to supervise some of these efforts, which were run by a new government agency with a bland name: the National Program Office. It had its own building in the Washington area, run by a two-star general, and a secret budget adding up to hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Much of this money was spent on advanced communications equipment that would enable the teams to have secure conversations with U.S. military commanders. In fact, the few details that have previously come to light about the secret program, primarily from a 1991 CNN investigative report, stemmed from allegations of waste and abuses in awarding contracts to private companies, and claims that this equipment malfunctioned.

The exercises were usually scheduled during a congressional recess, so that Cheney would miss as little work on



Capitol Hill as possible. Although Cheney, Rumsfeld, and one other team leader took part in each exercise, the Cabinet members changed depending on who was available at a particular time. (Once, Attorney General Ed Meese participated in an exercise that departed from Andrews in the pre-dawn hours of June 18, 1986—the day after Chief Justice Warren Burger resigned. One official remembers looking at Meese and thinking, “First a Supreme Court resignation, and now America’s in a nuclear war. You’re having a bad day.”)

In addition to the designated White House chief of staff and his President, each team included representatives from the Departments of State and Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency, and also from various domestic-policy agencies. The idea was to practice running the entire federal government with a skeletal crew during a nuclear war. At one point there was talk of bringing in the governors of Virginia and Maryland and the mayor of the District of Columbia, but the idea was discarded because they didn’t have the necessary security clearance.

The exercises were designed to be stressful. Participants gathered in haste, moved and worked in the early-morning hours, lived in Army-base conditions, and dined on early, particularly unappetizing versions of the military’s dry, mass-produced MREs (meals ready to eat). An entire exercise lasted close to two weeks, but each team took part for only three or four days. One team would leave Washington, run through its drills, and then—as if it were on the verge of being “nuked”—hand off to the next team.

The plans were carried out with elaborate deception, designed to prevent Soviet reconnaissance satellites from

exercise a team of officials stayed aloft in this plane for three days straight, cruising up and down the coasts and back and forth across the country, refueling in the air.

When George H.W. Bush was elected President, in 1988, members of the secret Reagan program rejoiced; having been closely involved with the effort from the start, Bush wouldn’t need to be initiated into its intricacies and probably wouldn’t re-evaluate it. In fact, despite dramatically improved relations with Moscow, Bush did continue the exercises, with some minor modifications. Cheney was appointed Secretary of Defense and dropped out as a team leader.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet collapse, the rationale for the exercises changed. A Soviet nuclear attack was obviously no longer plausible—but what if terrorists carrying nuclear weapons attacked the United States and killed the President and the Vice President? Finally, during the early Clinton years, it was decided that this scenario was farfetched and outdated, a mere legacy of the Cold War. It seemed that no enemy in the world was still capable of decapitating America’s leadership, and the program was abandoned.

There things stood until September 11, 2001, when Cheney and Rumsfeld suddenly began to act out parts of a script they had rehearsed years before. Operating from the underground shelter beneath the White House, called the Presidential Emergency Operations Center, Cheney told Bush to delay a planned flight back from Florida to Washington. At the Pentagon, Rumsfeld instructed a reluctant Wolfowitz to get out of town to the safety of one of the underground bunkers, which had been built to survive nuclear attack. Cheney also ordered House Speaker Dennis Hastert, other congressional leaders, and several Cabinet members (including Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and Interior Secretary Gale Norton) evacuated to one of these secure facilities away from the capital. Explaining these actions a few days later, Cheney vaguely told NBC’s Tim Russert, “We did a lot of planning during the Cold War with respect to the

possibility of a nuclear incident.” He did not mention the Reagan Administration program or the secret drills in which he and Rumsfeld had regularly practiced running the country.

Their participation in the extra-constitutional continuity-of-government exercises, remarkable in its own right, also demonstrates a broad, underlying truth about these two men. For three decades, from the Ford Administration onward, even when they were out of the executive branch of government, they were never far away. They stayed in touch with defense, military, and intelligence officials, who regularly called upon them. They were, in a sense, a part of the permanent hidden national-security apparatus of the United States—inhabitants of a world in which Presidents come and go, but America keeps on fighting. ▀

Reagan established the program with a secret executive order. Within the National Security Council the “action officer” for the program was Oliver North; George H.W. Bush was given the authority to supervise some of its efforts.

detecting where in the United States the teams were going. Thus the teams were sent out in the middle of the night, and changed locations from one exercise to the next. Decoy convoys were sometimes dispatched along with the genuine convoys carrying the communications gear. The underlying logic was that the Soviets could not possibly target all the makeshift locations around the United States where the Reagan teams might operate.

The capstone to all these efforts to stay mobile was a special airplane, the National Emergency Airborne Command Post, a modified Boeing 747 based at Andrews and specially outfitted with a conference room and advanced communications gear. In it a President could remain in the air and run the country during a nuclear showdown. In one



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How the caretakers of Lenin's corpse have made a killing in post-Soviet Russia

BY KEITH GESSEN

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At around one in the afternoon on October 17, 1994, barely a year after President Boris Yeltsin ordered tanks to shell the Russian parliament and then, with his inimitable flair, ordered the honor guard to abandon Lenin's Mausoleum for the first time since 1924, a popular young journalist named Dmitry Kholodov returned to his desk at the *Moskovsky Komsomolets* newspaper. He carried a briefcase he'd picked up earlier that day from a locker at the Kazansky train station. *MK* at the time was Russia's most crusading, muckraking paper, and Kholodov, who was investigating corruption in the military, had been led to believe that the briefcase contained valuable documents. It turned out to be booby-trapped. The force of the explosion, which Kholodov almost wholly absorbed, would have been enough to derail a train. It tore the fingers from his right hand and partially severed his right leg from his body.

The memorial service for the journalist was attended by thousands of Muscovites—the largest such public mourning since the beloved dissident Andrei Sakharov died, in 1989. Wishing Kholodov to appear in an open casket, the newspaper's editors asked a group of scientists at the laboratory of the Lenin Mausoleum—the same scientists responsible for maintaining Lenin's body—to get him into shape.

"His face was very badly singed, so we applied a chemical bleaching agent," Georgy Tischenko, one of those scientists, told me last spring when I visited him in Moscow. A metal rod was inserted to reattach the leg. "We had two or three teams working all night. We used prosthetic bones for his fingers."

Tischenko and his colleagues had been performing freelance embalming at the laboratory for more than a year. The moonlighting was Tischenko's idea. A specialist in anatomy (his dissertation work was on the properties of postmortem hair), he had come to the lab in 1983, had headed its branch of the Communist Youth League (Komsomol), and had traveled to Vietnam, Angola, and Bulgaria to monitor the state of their immortalized revolutionary heroes (including Ho Chi Minh). But the collapse of the Soviet empire had put a crimp in the dictator-embalming business. The lab was staffed by some of the country's

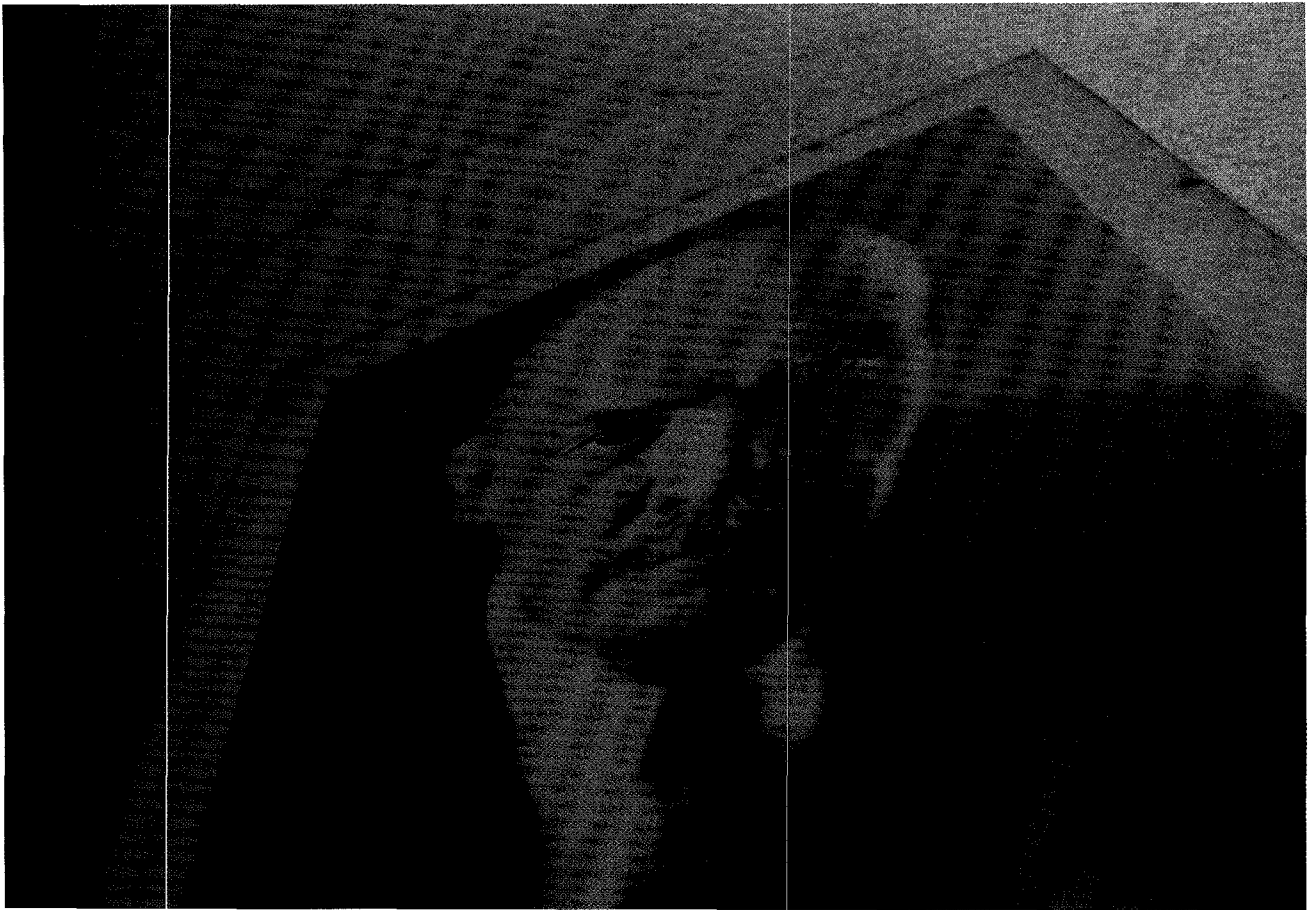
top biochemists and had been taken over by the Institute for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, which hoped to use the scientists' expertise for pharmaceutical research—but the anatomists didn't know from aromatic plants. "There was no money coming in for us, and we had to live on something," Tischenko said. "At first I applied for work as a dentist, but they had plenty of their own specialists. Then I thought maybe I could find something in my own field." Tischenko, who was in his mid-thirties, approached the head of Ritual-Service, the city's largest funeral company, and soon Ritual's agents were directing their wealthier customers his way.

The Komsomol leader had discovered what U.S. investment bankers call an "unmet market opportunity," and what Russian entrepreneurs more romantically term a "free theme": as the state relinquished not only its property but also its will to enforce the laws on how that property would be divided, Russia became a shooting gallery. In 1993–1994 Moscow, a city not known for its record-keeping, counted some 5,600 murders—2,000 more than in equally populous New York. The majority of these were drunken or domestic altercations, but as many as 20 percent were business-related contract killings. Renting space from the laboratory, Tischenko and his crew worked in the evenings. Kholodov and some luminaries aside, the bulk of the customers requiring serious reconstructive necrosurgery were bankers and crime bosses and combinations of the two.

"One time," a scientist from the laboratory told me, "these guys came in with their chief, who'd been shot up, and he was lying there, and the next in charge, his lieutenant, got down on his knees and started licking the chief's wounds. One of the girls working with us fainted. We had to carry her out. A few days later that lieutenant was shot, so his boys brought him in. And then, those boys were drinking, they all got in a car accident. In a couple of weeks we embalmed the whole crew."

Lenin might have chortled ("the worse, the better!") at the brutality of actually existing capitalism, but the caretakers of his corpse felt no ideological vindication at the fate of the new exploiting class.

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Trotsky had called Stalin's bureaucrats the gravediggers of the Bolshevik revolution; the entrepreneurial Lenin morticians were, far more literally, the embalmers of the capitalist one.

"They brought us bodies, not bandits," recalled the anatomist Alexander Tkachenko when I met with him and his colleague Pavel Fomenko. "And it was very interesting work. Our teachers, Sergei Debov and Yuri Lopukhin"—the laboratory's longtime director and one of its senior scientists, respectively—"would come down and say, 'See? That's what I was talking about, right there.' It was very interesting work."

At the laboratory Tischenko or Tkachenko would meet with the relatives—or, just as often, the business associates—of the deceased in a small office near the front of the building. They would discuss the work that needed to be done and how much it would cost.

"The people who came had a certain humility," Fomenko, a courtly, soft-spoken man with a drooping moustache, told me. "In a normal morgue, I think, there'd be more of"—he spread out his arms and thrust forward his chest—"I'm so-and-so, I'm this-and-that."

"These were people," Tkachenko explained, "who, on the streets—it was difficult sometimes to get along with them. They might push you, or say something rude."

"But when they came to the laboratory," Fomenko said, "they found themselves in a different world. For the Soviet

person, there was something very powerful about the image of Lenin. It pressed on their minds. And then suddenly they met people who were specialists, who weren't after money. There were never any moments when they threatened us or told us what to do."

"Actually, there was one," Tkachenko said, smiling. A specialist in postmortem facial skin, he is the most stylish and up-to-date of the anatomists, with a trim black beard and black turtleneck and an Audi in the lot. "A group of them came in with their 'brother.' He'd been shot, and they were all drunk. We were in that little office, and they were all standing around me and the body, saying, 'Why ain't he breathing? Why ain't he breathing?'" Finally an elder statesman from the group arrived and told the boys to leave Tkachenko alone.

As the scientists stitched and inserted fake bones and fended off bereft bandits in the evenings, they were rapidly becoming legends. Tales spread about the Soviet-era magicians who roused the New Russians briefly back to lifelikeness. Western journalists had a hoot when the former mausoleum scientist Ilya Zbarsky described the gangster-beautifying business in *Lenin's Embalmers*, a book he co-authored in

1997 with the French news photographer Samuel Hutchinson. The symbolism was irresistible. Trotsky had called Stalin's bureaucrats the gravediggers of the Bolshevik revolution; Tischenko and company were, far more literally, the embalmers of the capitalist one.

In 1995 most of the anatomists left the mausoleum laboratory to launch themselves in the world. Tischenko became the head of the city-owned Ritual-Service, which at the time had a chokehold on the Moscow funeral industry, and Tkachenko became the first director of a modern million-dollar morgue constructed by Ritual-Service in southern Moscow. It was rumored that the Lenin scientists, undertakers to the underworld, had all become fantastically wealthy.

Had they? It was not a simple question, and as I began to try to answer it, I found a very different story from the one I expected—and a very different Russia. The mobsters and murders and easy ironies were all from a happier time. There are new sheriffs in town, or possibly just new mobsters; they're not licking anyone's wounds, anyway, and they're not smiling.

The scientists who still work at the mausoleum lab are officially discouraged from talking with journalists (after

"Even now," Mayakovsky had written shortly after Lenin's death, "Lenin is more alive than all the living" and it was the task of the Lenin scientists to make sure this only became truer. Lenin's widow, Nadezhda Krupskaya, remarked during a visit to the mausoleum shortly before her death that Lenin retained his youth even as she aged. Indeed, while the rest of the country suffered starvation, terror, and ruined complexions (from the horrific industrial waste), Lenin was coddled and cosmetically enhanced and bathed in a top-secret fluid. He was, incredibly, the first person evacuated from Moscow—in July of 1941, months before the Wehrmacht reached the city's outskirts. As in 1917, when he passed through Germany on his way to the revolution, Lenin rode eastward in a specially equipped compartment. "The train passed birch trees and oaks, then evergreens and pines," Alexei Abramov, the mausoleum's official historian, wrote. "It was as if nature herself had risen to form a thousand-kilometer honor guard." In Siberia, while armies slaughtered one another to the west, the corpse's condition actually improved under the care of the accompanying mausoleum scientists. Lenin even put on some weight.

After Stalin died, in 1953, he, too, received a thorough, permanent embalming, and was placed beside Lenin. Eight

In Siberia, while armies slaughtered one another to the west, the condition of Lenin's corpse actually improved under the care of the accompanying mausoleum scientists. Lenin even put on some weight.

many years of enforced silence they talked too freely during the 1990s), but I managed to find one who was quite eager. We met on several afternoons under the statue of the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, on Tverskaya Street, and he would hand me documents as if it were 1973 and we were smuggling a human-rights letter to *The New York Times*. What he actually gave me were flattering articles about Tischenko, which he'd carefully annotated, pointing out errors of fact and interpretation. The scientist, whom I'll call Viktor, admires Tischenko; he is even, like most everyone I spoke with, afraid of Tischenko; but he was Tischenko's superior at the lab, and there were some things he wanted to make certain I understood.

"They never made it into the mausoleum," he said of Tischenko and the others who left in 1995. Only a select group of senior scientists, himself included, were allowed to work on Lenin, while the rest did research on Lenin-related topics. "They think they know the secrets, but they don't know them. They never found them out."

Viktor is in his late sixties, the author of more than a hundred papers on embalming science and postmortem cell behavior. He earns maybe \$150 a month. The prestige of the mausoleum is all he has—and not so long ago it would have been plenty. The mausoleum's laboratory was elite Soviet science at its most absurd and extravagant.

years later, after falling victim to the sort of nonperson campaign he'd done so much to perfect, Stalin was removed to a grave behind the mausoleum. But the lab continued to enjoy a very special relationship with Soviet officialdom, whose members were embalmed there in preparation for state funerals. Viktor recalled the terror of being roused by the black Volgas of the KGB in the middle of the night on February 9, 1984: Yuri Andropov had died.

But then, with youthful, fresh-faced Gorbachev, everything collapsed, and the lab became something of an embarrassment. "People wanted to cancel the laboratory and bury Lenin," Abramov recalled bitterly when I visited him last spring. "People wanted to change everything." Yeltsin threatened to find Lenin a proper grave, backing off only in the face of stiff Communist opposition and elderly nighttime picketers who gathered in front of the mausoleum whenever rumors indicated that Lenin might be removed under cover of darkness. Funding for the laboratory was eliminated, though the Institute for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants agreed to let the scientists devote some of their work time to Lenin's upkeep.

"They proved their civic courage then," Abramov says. "For a year and a half they worked on Lenin with no compensation." When the Russian press publicized this sad state of affairs, bleeding-heart Leninists from all over the former

Soviet Union sent money to the Kremlin (just as they'd once posted personal requests to "Lenin, Lenin Mausoleum, Red Square"). Abramov formed a committee to accept and distribute the funds, and the committee continues to pay for a rotating group of scientists to visit Lenin—every Tuesday and Friday morning between 9:00 and 11:00.

Abramov and I were having a very pleasant talk about all this in his office at *Gazeta Veteran*, one of the left-leaning newspapers for which he writes, until I brought up the after-hours work of Tischenko and his crew. "No, no, that never happened," Abramov said. "It's true, there was some sort of janitor, he started a business, he fixes up mafiosi." Here Abramov, who is seventy-eight, formed both his hands into pistols and produced a few mobsterlike gestures. "But never at the laboratory." His eyes narrowed. "But I know where you heard those rumors. From Zbarsky! I know all about him."

Zbarsky, who is ninety, has earned the undying enmity of the necro-Leninists by—in addition to writing about the moonlighting at the lab—stating publicly that the dictator should be buried. "We used to go back and forth in the press on these topics," Abramov told me. "Then I wrote him a letter. I called him a cowardly rat! He never answered." Abramov seemed both pleased and disappointed by this.

To Abramov and to Viktor, Georgy Tischenko represents the first wave of the new capitalism, which overturned the country, and everything sacred, in search of profit. In fact Tischenko represents something else, something newer; the first wave of Russian capitalists had to start getting whacked, after all, for Tischenko's business to get going.

Now, Vladimir Panin, Tischenko's chief competitor in the Moscow funeral market, is a first-wave specimen par excellence. His office is enormous, marble-staired, tightly guarded. ("You should see the other offices," he said. "They're nice.") The art on his walls is terrible—outsize realist landscapes of Russia, in heavy oils. A large man with a flushed, appealingly childlike face, he wears expensive suits and extracts cigarettes from a gold cigarette case and talks and talks and talks.

A friend and former med-school classmate of Tischenko's, Panin was not invited to work at the mausoleum laboratory; unlike Tischenko, he had never joined the Kom-somol, and unlike Tischenko, he is Jewish. Panin was no dissident, but he soon grew bored with his work as a cardiologist, and when, in 1987, the opportunity presented itself, he became the first of Russia's funeral capitalists, forming a cooperative to transport bodies from people's homes to city morgues. When that went well, he branched out: he placed ads in Russian émigré papers offering to care for the graves of relatives who'd been left behind; he also tried to interest Russians in cryogenics. He had more-realistic ideas as well, and his business—Styx, he named it—grew. Panin was invited to join the prestigious Moscow English Club, where Rus-

sian aristocrats used to play whist and plot against the Czar. More prestigious still, his Mercedes was shot up in 1994. Panin escaped unharmed.

The funeral industry that Panin entered was, like all Soviet industry, in dire straits by the end of the 1980s. Though improved since the early years of Soviet rule, when the combination of forced centralization and revolutionary terror led to piles of bodies lying unburied at the gates of Moscow's cemeteries, it was still hamstrung by a sullen bureaucracy. In order to arrange burial services, one needed to procure a death certificate at the Registry of Deeds, which was closed evenings and weekends; when open it was certain to have long lines of people registering births, marriages, divorces, apartment sales. Morgues were filthy, and the people working there were often drunk. Gravediggers had to be bribed and cajoled into producing a sufficiently deep hole. Really, one was better off staying alive.

Free enterprise took care of the registration problem; it is no longer difficult to bring attention to the death of a loved one. Competing funeral companies, especially shadowy groups operating without licenses, now pay good money for "death tips": 1,500 rubles (\$50) apiece. Police officers, nurses, and paramedics are among the top earners—one trouble being that many of these people like to supplement their meager incomes, and keeping their charges alive is not the way to do it. Tischenko finds these tipsters offensive; he thinks they're a scourge. But Panin is more philosophical. "Information is the lifeblood of business," he says. "If you don't have information, you don't know what's happening. And if you don't know what's happening, you'll lose business." But does he pay for it? "Gratitude, thankfulness—I think these have always been expressed in business relations, no?"

Panin is a Russian businessman writ large, and he was in especially good form when discussing the small shadow operations that were now encroaching on his turf. "When you enter someone's house," he explained, "you have to knock." And if one should fail to knock? "Then someone will come to you and say, 'Friend, you forgot to knock. That's not right.'"

Panin smiled. I smiled. I liked Panin very much, and I hoped he wouldn't get killed. Apparently, he'd been thinking the same thing. "No one wants a war," he said of the competition in the funeral industry. "A war is bad for everyone."

I used this opportunity to check the figure I had for the size of the Moscow funeral market, and Panin told me to double it; then he asked me not to print the sum. "It'll attract the wrong sort of attention."

"But it's public information," I said. "They can look it up."

"Then let them look it up," answered Panin, a man who began doing business at a time when criminal gangs were bribing bankers to show them companies' bank accounts. "No reason just to tell them."

Then he moved on. "I am very grateful to Gorbachev,"

he said of the early years. "Yes. Very grateful." He paused, looking, as his gratitude swelled, as if he were about to cry. "Yes," he repeated. "There is a poem, you know, by a man named Vladimir Lifshitz." And he began to recite the poem. I have met enough Russian businessmen of the first wave that their particular pathos no longer surprises me, but this was unprecedented. "Your heads were numbed / with newspaper lies," Panin quoted. "You were just a gray mass / in their eyes." Yes, that's right. We were a gray mass. And Gorbachev allowed us, allowed me, to break out of that gray mass and become an individual. I'm very grateful to him for that."

Georgy Tischenko is an entirely different sort of entrepreneur. Like Panin, he is a large man, well over six feet. Unlike Panin, he is reserved and careful—and weary. In his mid-forties, he looks older, slightly worn out; he wears tinted eyeglasses, as if, should the opportunity present itself, he'd rather not be out in Moscow's intermittent sun. His office is that of a successful bureaucrat, not a magnate: a long conference table, a minimum of personal effects, a small model coffin on his desk. Perhaps Tischenko has made a lot of money, but he doesn't care to

Tischenko, like that state, is now *krutoi*, powerful, and his is the style—gray, competent, cagey—of the new Russian elite.

And he is unhappy. At the mausoleum lab, he said, he was a man of science, whereas now, out in the world, he is faced with the most untoward behavior. The death-tip scourge especially is eating him up. It's giving the funeral industry a bad name. It's repulsive. "They harass people, people whose relatives have just died," he said. "The agents call them up and ask them to use their funeral service. I consider this immoral."

It's also eating into his bottom line. "There are twenty funeral companies in Moscow," he went on. He took out a piece of paper and wrote the number 20 on it. "That's not including the shadow operations. But all right, twenty. Out of those there are just three companies that don't pay for information." He wrote the number 3 and circled it. The island of the good.

Alexander Tkachenko sat in on part of my interview with Tischenko. "We decided to run our business normally, honestly," he said. "Maybe that was our mistake."

Tischenko was not so circumspect. "We need to wash away all the scum," he said. "We need to change the law. Enforce licensing [for the funeral companies]. We need order."

One necro-entrepreneur was invited to join the prestigious Moscow English Club, where Russian aristocrats used to plot against the Czar. More prestigious still, his Mercedes was shot up in 1994.

discuss it. (He does drive a 1998 300-Series Mercedes, and when he steered the conversation to the poverty of post-Soviet Russia, I pointed that out. "But it's an old Mercedes," he said. "And I bought it in Germany.") Although he was happy to recall the Lenin lab, I found him wholly uninterested in talking about the chaotic years of primitive capitalist accumulation. Pressed, he said that an evening's work of reconstructive necrosurgery back in 1993 was worth \$500, which, though equal to many monthly salaries, was not yet a killing. "You make money on a constant stream of clients," he said, "not on a few elite jobs."

Tischenko is no longer the undertaker to the underworld; now he has to bury everyone. Unlike Styx, Ritual-Service is a municipal company, so Tischenko has social responsibilities. If someone is too poor to pay, Ritual-Service must cover the costs; it was compelled to bury the hundred-odd victims of the October 2002 Nord-Ost hostage siege without charge. But he has a close working relationship with the mayor's office—a good relationship to have. If committees need to be sat on, or funeral-industry regulations drafted, Tischenko and the company's lawyers are the ones to sit and draft. It's clear that compared with Panin, Tischenko is not rich. Nor is he a member of the Moscow English Club. After a detour of sorts into free enterprise he has re-entered the apparatus of the state. But

I asked him whether he thought his somewhat disorderly competitor Panin would soon have "problems." "I think he'll have problems with the law-enforcement agencies," Tischenko said. "That's what I think."

An appeal to law, a visceral distaste for the scramble of post-Soviet Russia, "order"—it was the familiar Putinist refrain. And like Putin's, Tischenko's rhetoric is leavened with occasional doses of nostalgia for the USSR. As he told me about the halcyon days at the mausoleum lab, I recalled a claim Viktor repeatedly made: that those who'd left the lab regretted it, that "their lives haven't worked out." This isn't true: they have responsibilities, and a decent income (Fomenko, who also decamped for Ritual-Service, told me that his salary increased tenfold the day he left the lab), and Tischenko is far more influential than he ever could have been at a research institute. But it is true that a certain elevated purpose, no matter how bizarre, has disappeared from their lives, and they miss it.

According to one legend, embalming Lenin permanently was Stalin's idea. In late 1923, with the leader of the world's proletariat incapacitated by a stroke and clearly beyond recovery, Stalin suggested to the Politburo that modern science could preserve Lenin's body—"at least long enough," as he touchingly put it, "for us to get

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used to the fact that he really is no longer with us.” When Lenin finally succumbed, in January of 1924, an Immortalization Committee was set up, with Felix Dzerzhinsky at its head. The old-time Bolshevik Leonid Krasin took the initiative of refrigerating Lenin, but when the corpse began to deteriorate regardless, two specialists, Boris Zbarsky (Ilya Zbarsky’s father) and Vladimir Vorobev, were tapped for the preservation effort. Six months after he died, Lenin reappeared in the middle of Red Square in a makeshift wooden mausoleum, for all the world to see. Six years later this was replaced by the red-granite Lenin Mausoleum,

chance or faith. Purists—Krupskaya and Trotsky among them—would continue to find fault with the mausoleum, but in fact the thing summed up Lenin’s world view exactly. If social conditions alone did not create the new Soviet man, science would help him along.

Looking up “Kvadraty,” the poem that Panin had quoted, I was surprised to learn that Vladimir Lifshitz had actually published it in 1964—as a translation from English. According to Lifshitz’s son, Lev Loseff, now a poet and a literature professor at Dartmouth, Lifshitz had found that he could write more freely and more autobiographically, that he



perhaps the only genuinely avant-garde building erected by the Soviets in the center of Moscow. After World War II the mausoleum’s roof was retrofitted with a tribunal so that Soviet leaders could watch Red Square parades from *locus sanctorum*—the place, according to the old tradition of saints’ relics, where earth and heaven intersected—or, in the militarized language of the postwar USSR, “Strategic Location No. 1.”

Back in 1923 Leon Trotsky and Nikolai Bukharin, the most ideological of the Bolsheviks, protested vehemently against Stalin’s plan: it smacked to them of religion. But the audacity of it, and the horror, was in the materialism. Where Orthodoxy asked the faithful to believe that the bodies of its saints had not rotted, the Bolsheviks would demonstrate it in the most graphic terms. They left nothing to either

could be more himself, under an assumed identity. To this end he invented an English poet named James Clifford, sketched him a short biography, and began publishing fake translations of his work. Lifshitz was driven less by a fear of censorship, Loseff has written, than by a desire to break with habit—and also, one thinks, to take for himself, living as he was in a deeply unfree society, the freedom he imagined was enjoyed elsewhere.

A similar idea of man’s ability to re-create himself—a mania, really, for self-reinvention—gripped Russia in the early 1990s. Panin and the other New Russians, those shock troops of the free market, those knights of infinite currency speculation, actually believed that they were building another America on the bones of Soviet communism; that by buying low and selling high they were

making a political statement; that by burying themselves in expensive American caskets (often, Tischenko said, with copies of Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*), they were following in the wake of Don Corleone. Panin was showing me photos of all the stuff he owns when I told him about Tischenko's old Mercedes. "And I have a new Mercedes," he said happily. "And a Chevy Tahoe, for hunting and fishing trips." Marx wrote that nineteenth-century revolutions would have to create their poetry from the future. These revolutionaries created their poetry from the West, or the West they'd imagined during years of Soviet rule.

And now the age of the Panins is finished; the Tischenkos will make certain of that. But they will crush the independent operators without the malice or the ideological fervor of the Communists, because Tischenko's class of Russian businessmen, like the new class of Russian politicians headed by Putin, is post-ideological with a vengeance. This is the meaning of Putin's sinister, implacable blandness, of Tischenko's aggressive professionalism. The insistence of Putin's champions on the incorruptibility and even neutrality of Putin's old employer the KGB—"the myth of KGB probity," as sociologists call it—finds a direct echo in the language of the Lenin morticians. "The laboratory was a

But there seems to be a more fundamental dynamic at work, something in the very DNA of the new Russian elite, which insists that the 1990s upstarts be brought to heel. Tischenko, for his part, bears no grudge against Panin, in the way that Abramov bears a grudge against Zbarsky or Viktor against Tischenko; but in the new Russia, Panin—like Khodorkovsky—is the superfluous man.

The rest is irrelevant. "As long as there are people for whom this is holy," Tischenko says of Lenin, "we should let him stay." So Lenin's body, emptied not only of its inner organs (which leak toxins) and its brain (sent to the Brain Institute for a study of Lenin's genius) but also of all ideological significance, becomes simply a unique human experiment, like manned space flight or the genome project. Lenin's unburied corpse is the shared property of mankind. In which case perhaps he should once again share his mausoleum. In 1990 Sergei Debov was asked by a group of journalists about the embalming of Stalin, in which he'd participated. "This is off the record," he said. "But we embalmed Stalin so well that I think even now, if ..." He did not complete the thought, except to add, "Anyway, that spot behind the mausoleum is very dry and sandy."

Lenin's body, emptied not only of its inner organs and its brain but also of all ideological significance, has become simply a unique human experiment, like manned space flight or the genome project.

place for science," Fomenko insists. "We lived under a system that from within was perfectly coherent. If you couldn't see outside of it, and very few could, it made sense. We certainly had arguments at the laboratory about how things should be, how it could be better, but it was not an ideological place. Sergei Debov"—the lab's director—"was an extremely erudite man ... When he spoke, there was no trace of ideology in it."

Ideology, even politics, is in this view a corruption, an indulgence for those outside the centers of power. "The KGB, the KGB," Tischenko said, sighing with mild annoyance when I summed up my feelings about Putin. "The KGB wasn't just an organization for terrorizing dissidents, you know. It was also a powerful intelligence service. They were highly qualified professionals."

Soon after I finished gathering material for this article, the Kremlin launched its campaign against Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the Jewish chief executive of the oil giant Yukos, who had made his fortune during the sell-off of state property in the early and mid-1990s. Speculation as to why Putin would make such an obviously destabilizing move against a darling of Western investors focused on Khodorkovsky's nascent involvement in liberal politics and his plans to conclude a mega-deal with ExxonMobil.

I returned to the mausoleum on my last day in Moscow, a Friday. I set up shop outside the cool cubic structure, while scientists inside took care of Lenin. They checked to make certain the fluid inside him hadn't begun to seep out; they checked that the temperature and humidity had been constant over the past three days. When they hadn't appeared by 11:00 A.M., I began to worry that I'd missed them. Did they escape by a secret tunnel, with their secret fluid? And then, at 11:05, four elderly gentlemen emerged from an exit near Spassky Gate. They were slightly dour and very Soviet; if not for the flimsiness of their jackets, they could have been mistaken for old Politburo members, still haunting the grounds. I approached them and introduced myself. They ignored me.

"How's Lenin?" I asked.

"What Lenin?"

"Lenin. The body." Was I accosting the wrong elderly gentlemen? "You—work on him."

"We don't know what you're talking about."

They brushed past me. Two glistening white Volgas had pulled up at the southern edge of Red Square. The drivers got out and greeted the four men, who split up and entered the waiting cars. And then, as I stood there, the Volgas sped off, two white-hulled ferries disappearing into the river of Moscow traffic. ■

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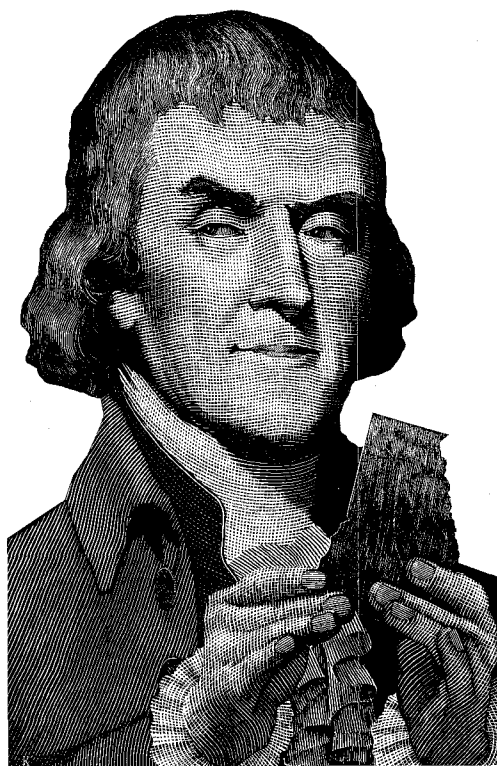
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BY BRUCE ACKERMAN AND DAVID FONTANA

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The presidential election of 1800 has long been notorious for both the ferocity of the partisan rancor it produced and the unforeseen constitutional problems it presented. Yet despite all the ink spilled on these issues, an unresolved question has persisted for two centuries. Did Thomas Jefferson, as president of the Senate, ignore irregularities in—and possible skulduggery behind—Georgia’s electoral ballot in order to eliminate his Federalist opponents from contention? Newspapers of the day reported that Georgia’s ballot was defective, and tales of Jefferson’s unusual behavior during the vote count echoed through the nineteenth century. But by the twentieth century the rumors and allegations had been completely forgotten, and the legions of Jefferson scholars and biographers had moved on to Sally Hemings and other things.

When we began our research on the 1800 election, we feared that the electoral ballots from that year had been destroyed during the War of 1812, when the British set fire to much of Washington. In fact the ballots survived: we discovered them in the recesses of the National Archives, and we can now reconstruct with some degree of certainty what really happened, and what Jefferson did, in February of 1801. The story certainly gives one pause—less, perhaps, for what it says about Jefferson’s behavior than for what it says about a still unaddressed flaw in the Constitution.



Bruce Ackerman, the Sterling Professor of Law and Political Science at Yale University, is the author of more than a dozen books, including We the People (1991–), a multivolume history of the Constitution. David Fontana is pursuing graduate degrees in law at both Yale and Oxford University. A longer version of this article will appear in the Virginia Law Review.

In 1800 the sitting President, John Adams, a Federalist, was facing off against his own Vice President, Thomas Jefferson, a Republican. (The Republican Party of 1800 was formally known as the Democratic-Republican Party, and it was the precursor to today’s Democratic Party.) Both parties believed that the very future of the Republic was at stake. To the Federalists, Jefferson and the Republicans were vicious factionalists who might import the French Revolution to America. To the Republicans, Adams and the Federalists were closet monarchists who aspired to copy the English model of government.

Today the idea that a President and his Vice President could hail from competing parties is wholly alien. But the Founders had inadvertently made it rather easy for this to happen. When the Constitution was drafted, the two-party system had not yet emerged, and no one especially wanted parties to arise at all. In fact, most of the political theorists on whom the Founders drew had equated

party division with factional strife; republics died when leaders factionalized, culminating in the despotic rule of Caesars or Cromwells.

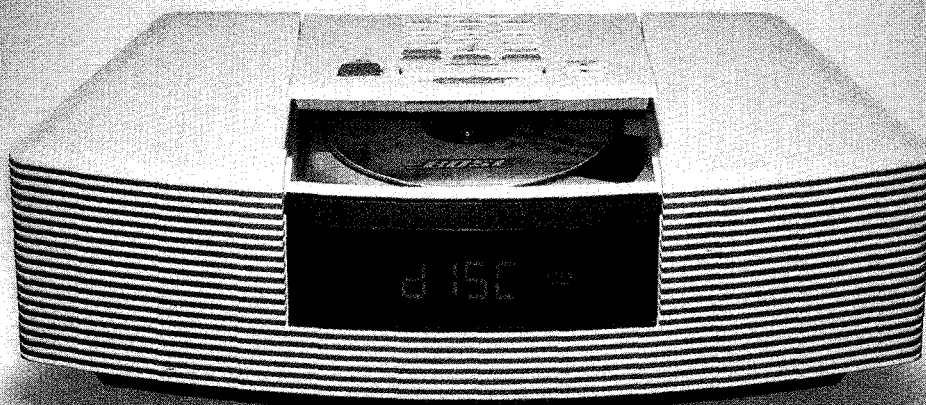
Factions in the United States, the Founders believed, were most likely to arise from geography, and specifically from the tendency of electors to vote their local interest rather than choosing men of “continental character,” like George Washington. The challenge in framing the Constitution was to engineer a way to keep

JONATHAN KOCH

PROOF

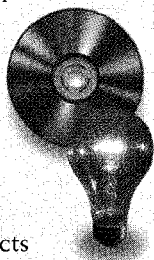
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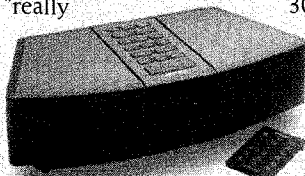
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a state's electors from banding together to vote for a favorite son. The solution the Founders came up with was this: give *two* votes to every elector, but permit him to cast only one vote for a citizen from his own state. To prevent electors from casting only one vote—for a favorite son—and leaving the other ballot blank, the Founders invented the vice presidency. With a second spot on the ticket available, the electors would not be likely to let a ballot go to waste. "It's true that George Washington is an out-of-stater," the Founders imagined them thinking, "but I might as well vote for the best man for the job, because the Constitution gives me the opportunity to cast two votes. And I still get a chance to cast a ballot for our hometown guy, the honorable John Q. Squire, who will have a chance at the vice presidency." Having created the vice presidency, the Founders had to create a job description for it. So they decided that the Vice President would serve as president of the Senate; the position would be mainly ceremonial, but he might be called on to break a tie among the senators.

The Founders blundered three times here. First, it did not occur to them that candidates would run for the presidency on competing national-party tickets, so they never imagined the scenario that elected the Federalist Adams

ence" of the two houses, they are not expressly granted any sort of decision-making authority in the event of a dispute. The Founders failed to provide clear rules for how to proceed in this situation—a high-stakes moment when passions might flare. The vote-counting ritual could easily end with a disputed ruling from the chair, bitter protest from Congress, and no clear decision on who had won election as the next President of the United States.

It didn't take long for these problems to become evident. In 1796, for instance, important newspapers reported that the four electoral votes from Vermont—for Adams and Thomas Pinckney, of South Carolina—were invalid, for a variety of technical reasons. It mattered tremendously whether these reports were true: Adams led Jefferson by three electoral votes—he would lose the presidency if the Vermont votes were found to be invalid. On February 8, 1797, when Adams presided over the vote count, a cloud of suspicion still hovered over the Vermont ballot. It was an unfortunate time for a controversy to break out. This was only the third presidential election in U.S. history, and the first to be seriously contested. Adams's dual role as president of the Senate and leading presidential candidate placed him in an awkward position: anything he did might be interpreted in the light of

In 1801 Jefferson found himself presiding over a vote count in which his own election to the presidency was at stake—and something in Jefferson's behavior during the formal count was strange.

and the Republican Jefferson in 1796. If this system had still obtained in 2000 (it didn't because the process was changed with the adoption of the Twelfth Amendment, in 1804), then Al Gore might have been George W. Bush's Vice President.

The second blunder was to authorize a Vice President, as president of the Senate, to preside over electoral-vote counts for a presidential election in which he himself might be running. This meant that Adams in 1796 (when, as Washington's Vice President, he was running against Jefferson) and Jefferson in 1800 (when, as Adams's Vice President, he was running against Adams) were in a position to preside over their own election results, putting them in a situation where they might have been tempted to elect themselves to the presidency by manipulating the vote count.

The Founders compounded this error with yet a third mistake. The Constitution isn't clear on the vote-counting process. Here's all it says: "The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all the Certificates and the Votes shall then be Counted." But what happens if the Senate president discovers a legal difficulty in a ballot submitted by a state? Although he is assigned to "open" the ballots, he is not expressly authorized to make a final judgment on the validity of the votes; and although vote-counting occurs in the "pres-

his own self-interest. If he was seen to have counted himself into the presidency by accepting some technically flawed ballots, the legitimacy of the 1796 election would be called into doubt and the Constitution would be off to a very bad start. Jefferson, for his part, took the statesmanlike high ground, writing to James Madison from Monticello,

I observe doubts are still expressed as to the validity of the Vermont election. Surely in so great a case, substance and not form should prevail ... I pray you to declare it on every occasion foreseen or not foreseen by me, in favor of the choice of the people substantially expressed, and to prevent the phaenomenon of a Pseudo-president at so early a day.

In other words, Jefferson was saying, let the will of the electors prevail; even if there were legal problems with the ballot, it should be counted for Adams, since he was clearly the state's choice.

On vote-counting day in 1797 the *Annals of Congress* recorded that after Adams reported the tally (71 votes for Adams, 68 for Jefferson, 59 for Pinckney, 30 for Aaron Burr, and so forth), "the President of the Senate then sat down for a moment" before rising to address Congress again. Four years earlier, when Adams had presided over his first vote count as Vice President (but when there had been no ballot controversy), the *Annals* had recorded nothing about his pausing to sit down. Adams's decision to sit appears



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to have been deliberate. It seems likely that he had doubts about his power as president of the Senate to resolve disputed questions unilaterally—and that he gave the Republican opposition a chance to raise objections. But the Republicans followed Jefferson's instructions and refused to indulge in legalistic quibbling. Hearing no objection, Adams declared himself the nation's second President.

Four years later Jefferson found himself in a similar position: presiding over a vote count in which his own election to the U.S. presidency was at stake. By 1800 the electors had stopped using their second ballots to reward favorite sons; partisanship demanded that they vote a party-line ticket, with two members of the same party on

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Is light the last thing lost or never lost at all?
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by the time we see it,
the tail lights on the highway far ahead

that say someone is traveling
this same dark way.

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years ago at the edge of the universe

redshift from ultraviolet to the visible
and are found by the Hubble telescope,

sleek horse pulling through dark
the reeling carriages of space

even as they change into roses
or thunderheads or phantom animals

we never imagined.
What fiery dust was our beginning,

left us a tender earth? Far out in the universe
a tomorrow we can't see is singing the last word

of a song we heard long ago under stars
like blossoms on black water.

—JOAN SWIFT

Joan Swift's most recent book of poems is The Tiger Iris (1999).

each ballot. For the Republicans that ticket was Jefferson and Aaron Burr, a leading politician from New York; for the Federalists it was Adams and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (not to be confused with Thomas Pinckney, the Federalists' vice-presidential candidate in 1796). The Constitution did not, however, specify that electors should cast one vote for President and one for Vice President—only that the top vote-getter would become President and the second-place vote-getter would become Vice President. To assure that Adams would be President if the Federalists won the election, one of the Federalist electors cast his second vote for John Jay, a contributor to *The Federalist Papers*, rather than for Pinckney. The Republicans were not so astute: all their electors voted a straight Jefferson-Burr ticket, giving both men the same number of votes.

When the votes were tallied, Jefferson and Burr each had 73; Adams had 65, Pinckney 64, and Jay one. According to the Constitution, a tie vote is thrown to the House of Representatives. Much has been written about the series of thirty-five deadlocked ballots (orchestrated by Federalists) in the House, which ended only when Congressman James Bayard, of Delaware, finally defected on the thirty-sixth ballot from the Federalist coalition that supported Burr, giving Jefferson the presidency.

This was exquisite melodrama. But we have discovered that a quieter though no less real constitutional drama occurred earlier. Under the rules of the Constitution an election would not move to the House until after a formal count of the electoral ballots from each state. Jefferson, as president of the Senate, presided over the count scheduled for February 11, 1801.

During the nineteenth century mysterious lore enshrouded this vote count: something (or so rumor and recollection had it) had been amiss with the Georgia ballot that year, which was cast for Jefferson and Burr; and something in Jefferson's behavior during the formal count had been strange. The first report of a hitch appeared in a Philadelphia newspaper, the *Aurora*, the day of the count. At "half past 3 o'clock, P.M.," the *Aurora* reported, the tellers (who were appointed by Congress to help Jefferson with the vote count) "declared there was some informality in the votes of Georgia, but believing them to be the true votes, reported them as such." The leading Republican paper of its era, the *Aurora* would be unlikely to invent a story that cast doubt on the legitimacy of Jefferson's election. Its report was subsequently copied verbatim by newspapers of many different political leanings in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Savannah.

Was something in fact wrong with the Georgia ballot? Was there a chance that it had been tampered with before reaching Jefferson?

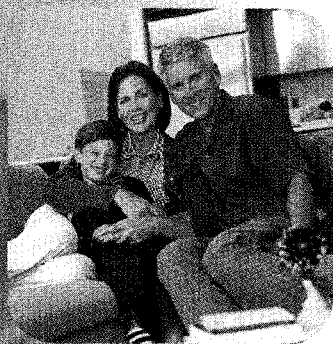
Georgia was notorious for shady dealings. Many of its leading politicians had recently been bribed in a land deal. Jefferson would have known this, and would have had good reason to be suspicious if something about the Georgia

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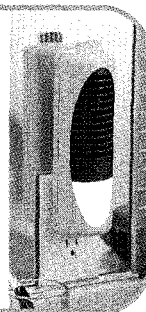
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ballot appeared amiss. Newspaper accounts from the time focused on the tellers' decision to ignore irregularities in the Georgia ballot. But the Constitution does not even mention the tellers, let alone give them any authority over such matters. It was up to the president of the Senate to determine what would happen next. Did Jefferson, then, ignore serious irregularities in the Georgia ballot when presiding over the vote count?

If he did, the implications for the 1800 election were significant: the loss of Georgia's four votes would have left Jefferson and Burr with only 69 votes each—and this would have made a big difference in the subsequent proceedings. As it then stood, the Constitution laid out two kinds of runoff. The first occurred when two tied first-place candidates each received votes from a majority of the electors; in that situation only the tied candidates would enter the runoff. The second occurred when the tied candidates failed to collect a majority of the votes; in this situation they had to compete in a runoff of the top five finishers from the original vote. In 1800 there were 138 electors voting—meaning that the magic number was 70. If Jefferson and Burr had dropped from 73 to 69 votes, then Jefferson would be competing not just with

should have invalidated the Georgia ballot, the historical consequences were profound: had that ballot been tossed out, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, not Thomas Jefferson, might well have become the third President of the United States.

What, if anything, is the evidence that Jefferson overlooked such irregularities? First there is the astonishing account that appears in Matthew Davis's two-volume *Memoirs of Aaron Burr: Complete With Miscellaneous Selections From His Correspondence*, published in 1836.

On the 11th of February the ballots were opened ... Mr. Jefferson was the presiding officer. On opening the package [of] endorsed Georgia votes, it was discovered to be totally irregular. The statement now about to be given is derived from an honourable gentleman, a member of Congress from the state of New York during the administration of Mr. Jefferson, and yet living in this state. He says that Mr. Wells (a teller on the part of the Senate) informed him that the envelope was blank; that the return of the votes was not authenticated *by the signatures of the electors, or any of them, either on the outside or the inside of the envelope, or in any other manner*; that it merely stated in the inside that the votes of Georgia were, for Thomas Jefferson *four*; and for Aaron Burr *four*; without the *signature of any person whatsoever*.

By ignoring irregularities in the Georgia ballot, Jefferson helped ensure that he—and not Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina—became the third President of the United States.

Burr but also with Adams, Pinckney, and Jay.

In the two-man runoff that actually occurred, the Federalists supported Burr because he was their only means of stopping Jefferson's election, not because he was their candidate of choice. (Under the Constitution each state casts a single vote in the runoff, as determined by a majority of its House delegation. The runoff continues until a candidate wins a majority of the states. Since there were sixteen states in the Union in 1800, nine votes were required to win.) As noted, Jefferson beat Burr on the thirty-sixth ballot. But a five-candidate runoff would have had a different dynamic. Under the most likely scenario the Federalist states would all have voted Federalist indefinitely, because their man Adams would still have been in the running, and the deadlock would have continued long past thirty-six ballots. It is likely that at some point Charles Pinckney, the Federalists' vice-presidential candidate, would have emerged as a compromise candidate palatable to the Republicans. Not only had Pinckney been a war hero during the Revolution and a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, but he was an avowed moderate, and had opposed his own party when it passed the oppressive Alien and Sedition Acts, in 1798. Perhaps most important, he was a South Carolinian; this made him acceptable to many of Jefferson's supporters, the bulk of whom were from the South.

Thus if Jefferson did in fact ignore irregularities that

Mr. Wells added, that he was very undecided as to the proper course to be pursued by the tellers. It was, however, suggested by one of them that the paper should be handed to the presiding officer, without any statement from the tellers except that the return was informal; that he consented to this arrangement under the firm conviction that Mr. Jefferson would announce the nature of the informality from the chair; but, to his utmost surprise, he (Mr. Jefferson) rapidly declared that the votes of Georgia were *four* for Thomas Jefferson and *four* for Aaron Burr, without noticing their informality, and in a hurried manner put them aside, and then broke the seals and handed to the tellers the package from the next state. Mr. Wells observed, that as soon as Mr. Jefferson looked at the paper purporting to contain a statement of the electoral vote of the state of Georgia, his countenance changed, but that the decision and promptitude with which he acted on that occasion convinced him of that which he (a federalist) and his party had always doubted, that is to say, Mr. Jefferson's decision of character, at least when his own interest was at hazard.

If Davis's account is to be believed, Jefferson quickly glossed over the irregularities in the Georgia ballot and counted himself into the presidency. But should we believe this? As Davis himself concedes, his account comes to him thirdhand from an anonymous congressman who heard it from Senator Wells, a teller at the proceedings. Like many hearsay reports, this one contains some errors. Davis exag-

"...I sat in the car at the community center where I pick my daughter up each evening, but I couldn't get out of the car even though I was late. The story had me anchored to the car. I had my hand on the door handle and tears in my eyes..."

—Tanya who listens to Oregon Public Broadcasting

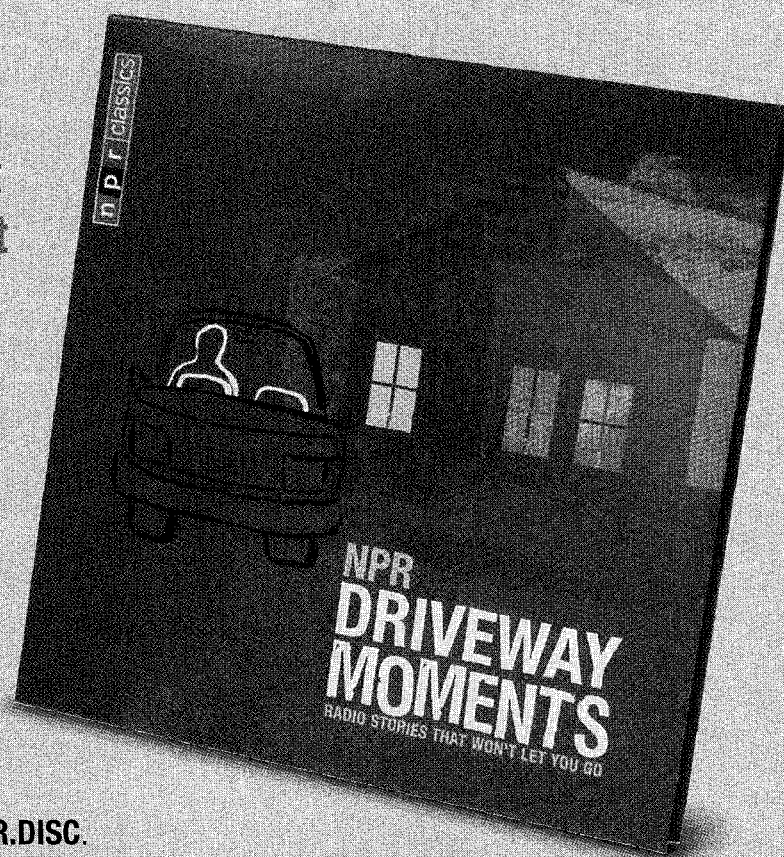
"...I had to sit in my car at my office parking lot and finish listening to the story. Many of my co-workers walked by and gave me funny looks while I sat in the car by myself and chuckled out loud..."

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gerates in claiming that the Georgia ballot failed to contain any "signature of any person whatsoever." And in fact the outside of the envelope—though not the ballot itself—includes the signatures of the electors and the statement "We do certify the within to contain the votes of Us the electors on behalf of the state of Georgia for a President and Vice President of the United States." But Davis is right in reporting blatant legal defects with the ballot, and his larger account squares roughly with what the *Aurora* published at the time. Nevertheless, we should be cautious in dealing with the more melodramatic aspects of his report. Wells was a Federalist, and therefore inclined to be prejudiced against Jefferson. Furthermore, Davis was a longtime Burr loyalist and an active Jefferson-hater. It would be wrong to give his story, standing alone, too much credence.

But the basic outline of Davis's account is supported by a second source, one who held no anti-Jefferson bias. In 1876 Senator Hannibal Hamlin, who had served as Abraham Lincoln's first Vice President, described the event as follows, demonstrating that Jefferson's actions had survived as part of the oral tradition on Capitol Hill for three quarters of a century:

There was no certificate accompanying the return that the Electors met and balloted. It had nothing on its face to show that the votes were given for anybody. Clearly it did not conform to the Constitution, but it was counted as shown by the record. There was a tradition that the tellers handed it back to Mr. Jefferson, who returned it to them, and decided that it must be counted.

But after this the incident dropped from memory.

There is only one way to determine whether the Georgia ballot was constitutionally invalid—and that is by looking at it.

Article II of the Constitution contains plain instructions for each state's presidential electors: "And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate." Georgia's electoral ballot dramatically failed to comply with the requirements of Article II and the norms established by the uniform practice of all the states in all the early elections. Georgia's ballot should have looked like all the rest. It didn't.

Consider Tennessee's ballot. Like Georgia, Tennessee was on the frontier and had little access to legal expertise. Nevertheless, its ballot, like all the others cast in early presidential elections, was in perfect conformity with the Constitution's instructions: the top half of the ballot contained the certification by the electors; the bottom half contained

Pursuant to our duty as Electors for the State of Tennessee, having convened in Knoxville on the first Wednesday of December in the year eighteen hundred, and being legally qualified, We do certify that we voted by ballot for President and Vice President of the United States.—And upon counting the votes they were as follows.—

For Thomas Jefferson of the State of Virginia three votes.—

For Aaron Burr of the State of New York three votes.—

Given under our hands at Knoxville in the State of Tennessee this third day of December, One thousand eight hundred.

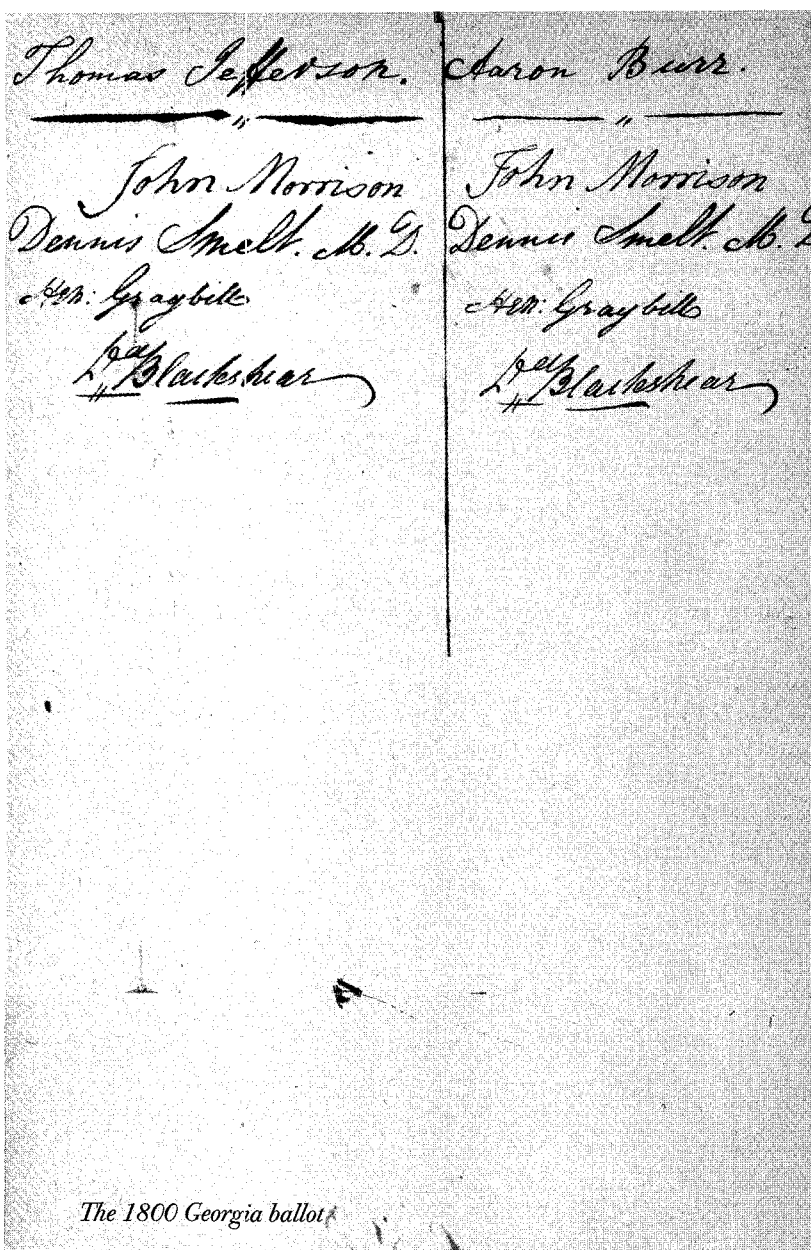
*Dan Smith
John Locke
R. Love*

The 1800 Tennessee ballot

their signatures and the required list of persons voted for and number of votes for each.

When Jefferson and the tellers looked at Georgia's ballot, however, they saw something very different: it contained a "list," but nothing explicitly identified Jefferson and Burr as the persons voted for. Indeed, it isn't even clear that the document is an electoral ballot, let alone one that was "signed" and "certified" as such. These violations may seem technical; a reasonable person looking at Georgia's ballot might interpret the electors' intention as being to vote for Jefferson and Burr. But another reasonable person might disagree; without the explicit statement that these were "the Persons voted for," it's possible that the paper was never intended as an electoral ballot. That is why the Constitution demands that these formal requirements be met precisely—to prevent someone in Jefferson's position from having to make a judgment call about electors' intentions.

Not only did Georgia's ballot look very different from



all the others in 1800, but there was something particularly suspicious about it. Every other state's envelope contained a second document, called a certificate of ascertainment, which was signed by the state's governor and confirmed that the electors had actually been selected by the state they represented. (This requirement had been added by a 1792 statute.) But Georgia's envelope contained only a single sheet of paper; the defective "ballot" was written on the back of the certificate of ascertainment. The fact that the Georgia ballot was different from all the others would have immediately suggested the possibility that it had been tampered with. Given the corruption in Georgia politics, it was conceivable that Georgia's four electors had prepared a proper ballot and put it into the envelope with the certificate of ascertainment, only to have some devious character remove their ballot and write in four votes for Jefferson and Burr on the back of the certificate.

A more benign interpretation is that the unconstitu-

tional Georgia ballot was the product not of malfeasance but, rather, of simple incompetence. Georgia, after all, was a frontier state without much legal talent. And the newspapers had consistently placed Georgia in the Republican—that is, the Jeffersonian—column in their reports of election results. If any of the state's electors had actually voted for the Federalists Adams and Pinckney, it's hard to believe they would have remained silent as they saw their votes publicly misrepresented as being for Jefferson and Burr.

Yet at the moment of decision in Washington, how could Jefferson or anyone else know for sure whether the votes were legitimate? On the one hand, Georgia's ballot plainly violated the formal requirements expressly laid down by the Constitution. And given recent political shenanigans in Georgia, it was possible that some shady dealing really had taken place—that the real ballot had been replaced by a fraudulent one. On the other hand, that state had a basic right to participate in the election of the nation's highest officer. Would it really serve the nation's constitutional values to disqualify an entire state merely because of a lawyer's mistake? And dispatching a fact-finding mission to Georgia's capital, then Louisville, would have taken too long: the trip from Washington took at least a week during the best of times, but this was the middle of a snowy winter, and only three weeks remained before the inauguration. Any judgment Jefferson made about the legitimacy of the Georgia ballot would have to be based on probability, not certainty.

Jefferson was also confronted by uncertainties about his institutional authority. As noted, the Constitution refers to both the Senate president and the two houses of Congress in describing the vote count. But the text fails to state clearly who should decide questions about contested ballots. If Jefferson were to raise questions about the Georgia vote from the chair, he might plunge the proceedings into a morass of bitter legalisms: the Federalists, a majority in both houses, might have insisted on the right of Congress to decide; the Republicans, meanwhile, would most likely have vigorously defended the authority of the Senate president to make the final judgment. A constitutional and political crisis loomed.

We can now piece together what Jefferson did in response to the predicament that the Constitution and the faulty Georgia ballot had suddenly put him in. On February 11 he and members of Congress made their way from their nearby rooming houses through a blinding snowstorm to the half completed Capitol building. The count began. As each state was called, Jefferson opened the envelope and passed the ballot to the tellers. When he

opened the Georgia ballot, the tellers looked at it and told him, in a tone loud enough for others in the room to hear, that there was a problem with it. They handed it back to Jefferson for re-examination. Jefferson then proceeded as if nothing remarkable had happened. Georgia's votes were included in the running total, and when all the states had been counted, Jefferson did not follow John Adams's example of 1797. Rather than sitting down for a moment, he immediately declared, in the words of the *Annals of Congress*, "that Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, and Aaron Burr, of New York, having the greatest number, and a majority of the votes of all the Electors appointed, and, being equal, it remained for the House of Representatives to determine the choice." With this declaration he eliminated his three Federalist rivals from a House runoff that he might well have lost.

Regarded in its historical context, however, Jefferson's decision may well have been made out of more than shabby self-interest or overweening ambition. Jefferson found himself in an impossible position—charged, in effect, with judging his own case. But that was the Founders' fault, not his.

Until Jefferson opened the Georgia envelope, he had every reason to believe that he and Burr had won that state's electoral votes; that's what the newspapers had been reporting. Moreover, the members of Georgia's congressional delegation—two of whom were Federalists—were present on the vote-counting day. Surely they would have raised a noisy objection

if they believed their state's votes had been placed in the wrong column. Moreover, Jefferson's guess about the Georgia electors' true intentions proved to be correct. We have gone on a fact-finding mission to the Georgia archives, and have found that the defects in the state's ballot were merely the result of frontier lawyering. There is no doubt that the electors intended to vote for the Republican ticket. Thus if Pinckney or Adams had emerged as President from a five-way runoff, he would quickly have confronted a severe legitimacy crisis.

When placed in a larger context, then, Jefferson's decision was consistent with his thinking that it was wrong for the Union to elect a "Pseudo-president." Recall that in 1796 he had expressed to Madison his belief that even if some technical problem were to be found with the Vermont ballot, "substance should prevail over form" and Adams should be President. Boxed into a difficult position by the poor planning of the Founders, Jefferson did the right thing by counting himself into the presidency.

Thanks to Jefferson's statesmanship, the Republic avoided a serious crisis in 1801. But two centuries later the Founders' blunder endures: the sitting Vice President continues to preside over the electoral count. On January 6, 2001, Al Gore was the president of the Senate who presided over the electoral count in the contested election between himself and George W. Bush. Of course,

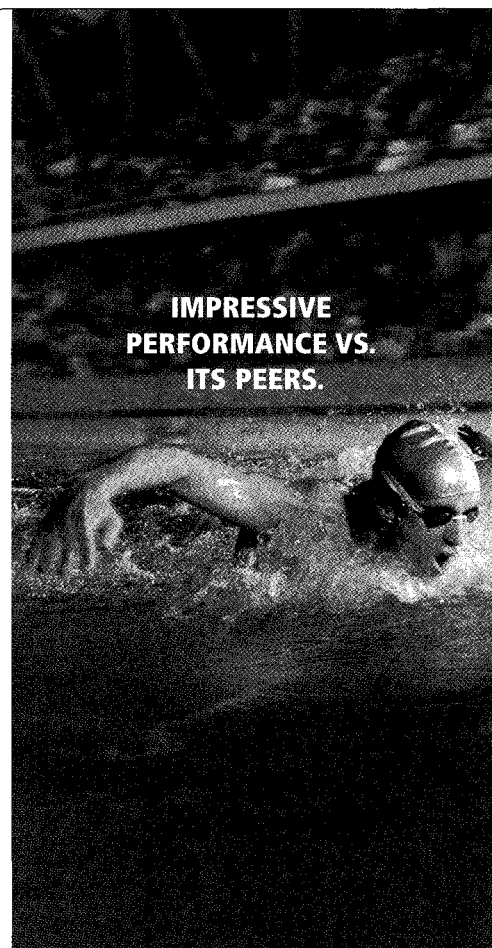
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the Supreme Court's intervention the previous December had reduced this count to an empty ritual. But the next time an electoral-college crisis occurs, the Supreme Court may be unwilling to repeat its much criticized performance. With the Court on the sidelines, the powers of the president of the Senate will once again loom large.

Over the years these powers have been limited—but not entirely eliminated—by legislation. A nineteenth-century statute makes it clear that the president of the Senate must obey the instructions of the House and the Senate as long as those chambers can agree on the proper course of action. But what happens if a state submits conflicting electoral votes and the two houses can't reach consensus on which slate should be counted?

Consider the following scenario. It's the election of 2008, and Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton are in a dead heat in a race for the White House. Florida has installed computerized voting equipment, but the shiny new machines suffer a series of technical breakdowns and produce questionable vote counts. As in the 2000 election, different branches of Florida's government find themselves at loggerheads: the secretary of state certifies a Bush victory, but the state supreme court instructs the Florida governor (Jeb Bush's successor) to certify a Clinton triumph. Both Republican and Democratic electors solemnly assemble in Tallahassee and send their rival electoral votes—duly

certified by members of Florida's executive branch, as the law requires—to Washington, D.C.

The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to arbitrate, declaring that *Bush v. Clinton* raises "political questions" best resolved by the political branches. But these questions are not so easily resolved: the midterm elections of 2006 have returned control of the Senate to the Democrats while making the House even more solidly Republican. The two chambers predictably deadlock on the Florida vote. All eyes turn, then, to the constitutionally designated superintendent of the proceedings, the president of the Senate—none other than, say, Vice President Dick Cheney, or perhaps Vice President Wesley Clark.

The sitting Vice President finds himself in much the same situation Jefferson encountered in 1801. He turns to the nineteenth-century statute, which blandly instructs the president of the Senate to count the electoral ballot certified by "the executive" of the state. But what happens when two conflicting ballots have been signed by an executive officer? The statute doesn't say. What should he do?

He should invoke the spirit of Jefferson and use his position's extraordinary powers to ensure that the "choice of the people" emerges from the proceedings and that no candidate (himself potentially included) manages to exploit the weaknesses in our constitutional design to become a "Pseudo-president." ▀

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WOULD SHAKESPEARE GET INTO SWARTHMORE?

How several well-known writers (and the Unabomber) would fare on the new SAT

BY JOHN KATZMAN, ANDY LUTZ, AND ERIK OLSON

Illustration by Richard Thompson

.....

Every year more than a million college-bound high school students spend a Saturday morning taking the SAT. In 2001 the University of California system, led by Richard Atkinson, then its president, threatened to change that by replacing the SAT with a test that measured a student's mastery of advanced high school-level math, did not contain verbal-analogy questions, and included an essay. Since the University of California is the SAT's biggest customer, and has been for more than thirty years, many thought this spelled the beginning of the end for the test.

In the summer of 2002 the College Board announced its plans to change the SAT. The new test will (surprise, surprise) contain several higher-level algebra questions, will no longer contain analogies questions, and will—as part of a whole new section on “writing”—include an essay question. It is scheduled to be administered for the first time in March of next year.

The writing section (which will be scored on a scale of 200 to 800, making 2400 the new maximum score on the SAT), will seem familiar to anyone who has taken the SAT II: Writing test (formerly known as the English Composition Achievement test). In its haste to satisfy the University of California, evidently, the College Board has simply tacked the SAT II test onto the SAT I. Students will have an extra half

hour to complete the test, which currently lasts three hours.

To grade the roughly 2.5 million student essays the new SAT will generate each year, the College Board will have to hire thousands of readers (mainly high school teachers), who will generally score each essay in a minute or two.

Students will be asked to respond to a vague, platitudinous quotation with an essay that will be graded on a scale of 1 to 6. Essay readers will be trained to grade “holistically,” taking into consideration “development of

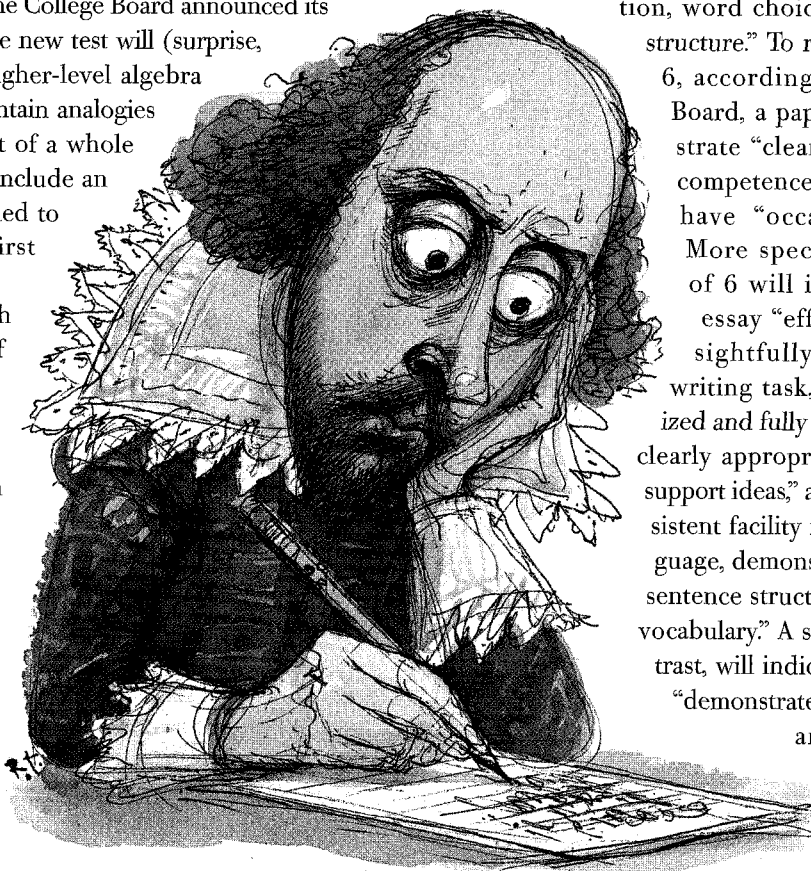
ideas, supporting examples, organization, word choice, and sentence

structure.” To receive a score of 6, according to the College Board, a paper must demonstrate “clear and consistent competence,” though it may have “occasional errors.”

More specifically, a grade of 6 will indicate that an essay “effectively and insightfully addresses the writing task,” “is well organized and fully developed, using

clearly appropriate examples to support ideas,” and “displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating variety in sentence structure and range of vocabulary.” A score of 1, in contrast, will indicate that an essay “demonstrates incompetence”

and suffers from one or more of the following weaknesses:



“very poor organization,” “very thin development,” “usage and syntactical errors so severe that meaning is somewhat obscured.” (The full version of the SAT grading rubric can be found at www.collegeboard.com.)

We and our colleagues at The Princeton Review have spent many years training students to take the SAT II, and have carefully analyzed the College Board’s essay-grading criteria. To receive a high score a student should write a long essay of three or more paragraphs, with each paragraph containing topic and concluding sentences and at least one sentence that includes the words “for example.” Whenever possible the student should use polysyllabic words where shorter, clearer words would suffice. The SAT essay will not be a place to take rhetorical chances. Flair will win no points; the highest-scoring essays will be earnest, long-winded, and predictable.

To illustrate how the essays on the “new” SAT will be scored, The Princeton Review has composed some typical essay questions, provided answers from several well-known authors, and applied the College Board’s grading criteria to their writing.

Directions: Consider carefully the following quotation and the assignment below it. Then plan and write an essay that explains your ideas as persuasively as possible. Keep in mind that the support you provide—both reasons and examples—will help make your view convincing to the reader.

“Writing is the most demanding of callings, more harrowing than a warrior’s, more lonely than a whaling captain’s—that, in essence, is the modern writer’s message.”
—Melvin Maddocks

Assignment: In an essay, discuss your opinion of the quotation above. Support your view with one or more examples from literature, the arts, science, politics, current events, or your personal experience or observations.

Writing, at its best, is a lonely life. Organizations for writers palliate the writer’s loneliness but I doubt if they improve his writing. He grows in public stature as he sheds his loneliness and often his work deteriorates. For he does his work alone and if he is a good enough writer he must face eternity, or the lack of it, each day.

For a true writer each book should be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment. He should always try for something that has never been done or that others have tried and failed. Then sometimes, with great luck, he will succeed.

How simple the writing of literature would be if it were only necessary to write in another way what has been well written. It is because we have had such great writers in the past that a writer is driven far out past where he can go, out to where no one can help him.

Reader’s evaluation: Although it displays a solid vocabu-

lary, Mr. Hemingway’s essay lacks specific examples and clear topic sentences. Too undeveloped to be good. Grade: 3 out of 6

“The four stages of life are infancy, childhood, adolescence, and obsolescence.” —Art Linkletter

All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players: They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages. At first the infant, mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms. And then the whining schoolboy with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like snail unwillingly to school. And then the lover, sighing like furnace, with a woe-ful ballad made to his mistress’ eyebrow. Then a soldier, full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard, jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon’s mouth. And then the justice, in fair round belly with good capon lined, with eyes severe and beard of formal cut, full of wise saws and modern instances; and so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts into the lean and slipper’d pantaloone, with spectacles on nose and pouch on side; his youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide for his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice, turning again towards childish treble, pipes and whistles in his sound. Last scene of all, that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Reader’s evaluation: This essay is poorly organized, with only one paragraph (though, to Mr. Shakespeare’s credit, the topic sentence does speak to what the rest of the sentences in his one paragraph are about). It is riddled with errors in syntax, incomplete sentences being the most noticeable problem. Although his supporting sentences are vivid in their description, they are vague and general, not true examples. And he unfortunately spells “honor” with the extraneous “u.” Grade: 2 out of 6

“Nothing great will ever be achieved without great men, and men are great only if they are determined to be so.”
—Charles de Gaulle

The Irish lady can say, that to-day is every day. Caesar can say that every day is to-day and they say that every day is as they say.

In this way we have a place to stay and he was not met because he was settled to stay. When I said settled I meant settled to stay. When I said settled to stay I meant settled to stay Saturday. In this way a mouth is a mouth. In this way if in as a mouth if in as a mouth where, if in as a mouth where and there. Believe they have water too. Believe they have that water too and blue when you see blue, is all blue precious too, is all that that is precious too is all that and they meant to absolve you. In this way Cezanne nearly did nearly in this way. Cezanne nearly did nearly did and nearly did. And was I surprised. Was I very surprised. Was I surprised. I

was surprised and in that patient, are you patient when you find bees. Bees in a garden make a specialty of honey and so does honey. Honey and prayer. Honey and there. There where the grass can grow nearly four times yearly.

Reader's evaluation: *Although Ms. Stein's essay is expressive, it's a bit flaky, lacking any semblance of structure, focus, or examples, and using non-standard syntax to boot. Grade: 1 out of 6*

"Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Psychologists use the term "socialization" to designate the process by which children are trained to think and act as society demands. A person is said to be well socialized if he believes in and obeys the moral code of his society and fits in well as a functioning part of that society. It may seem senseless to say that many leftists are oversocialized, since the leftist is perceived as a rebel. Nevertheless, the position can be defended. Many leftists are not such rebels as they seem.

The moral code of our society is so demanding that no

THE BELL ZYGMUNT

For fertility, a new bride is lifted to touch it with her left hand,
or possibly kiss it.

The sound close in, my friend told me later, is almost silent.

At ten kilometers even those who have never heard it know what it is.

If you stand near during thunder, she said,
you will hear a reply.

Six weeks and six days from the phone's small ringing,
replying was over.

She who cooked lamb and loved wine and wild-mushroom pastas.
She who when I saw her last was silent as the great Zygmunt mostly is.
A ventilator's clapper between her dry lips.

Because I could, I spoke. She laid her palm on my cheek to answer.
And soon again, to say it was time to leave.

I put my lips near the place a tube went into
the back of one hand.
The kiss—as if it knew what I did not yet—both full and formal.

As one would kiss the ring of a cardinal, or the rim
of that cold iron bell, whose speech can mean "Great joy,"
or—equally—"The city is burning. Come."

—JANE HIRSHFIELD

Jane Hirshfield's sixth collection, *Given Sugar, Given Salt*, was a finalist for the 2001 National Book Critics Circle Award in poetry.

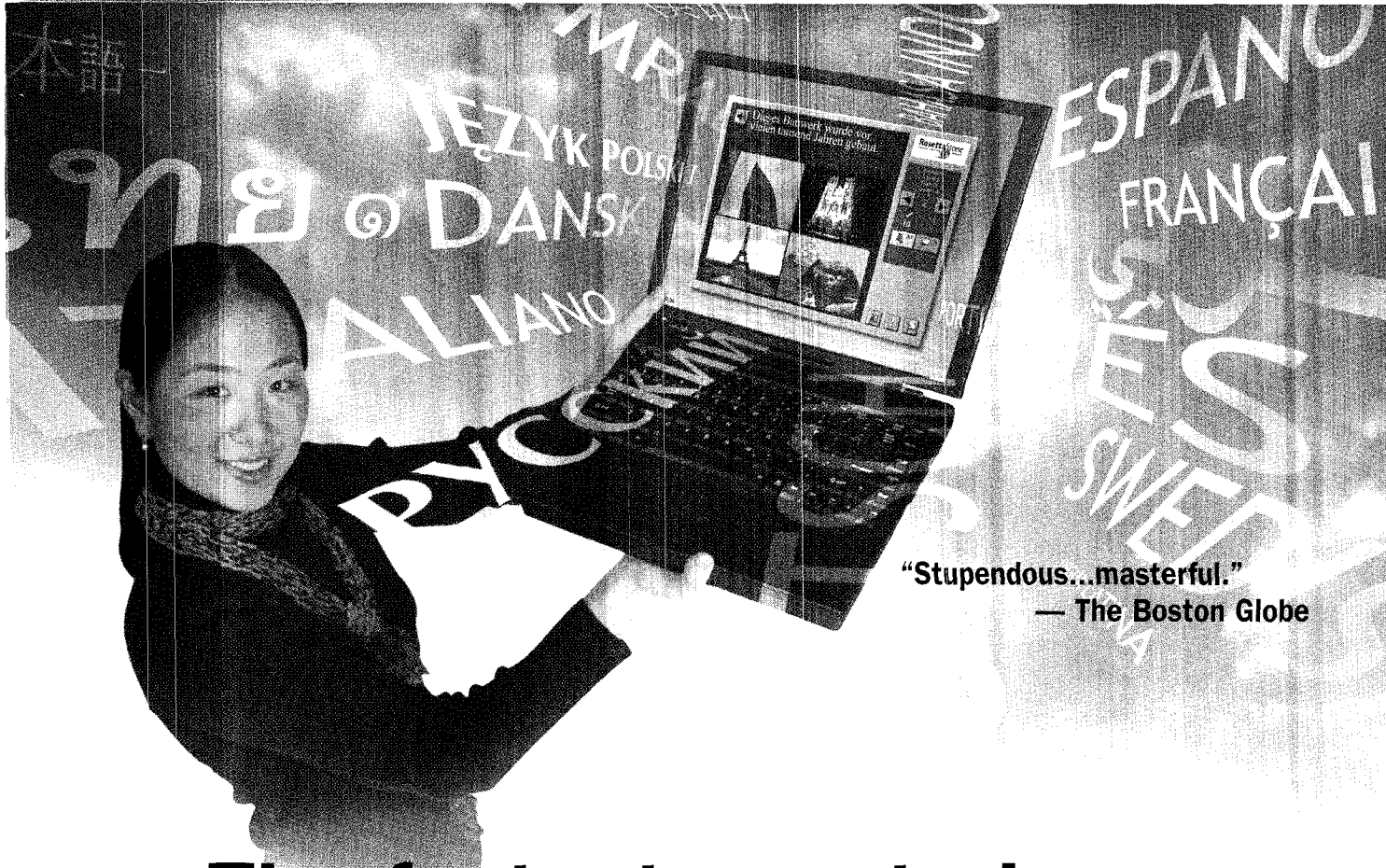
one can think, feel and act in a completely moral way. For example, we are not supposed to hate anyone, yet almost everyone hates somebody at some time or other, whether he admits it to himself or not. Some people are so highly socialized that the attempt to think, feel and act morally imposes a severe burden on them. In order to avoid feelings of guilt, they continually have to deceive themselves about their own motives and find moral explanations for feelings and actions that in reality have a non-moral origin. We use the term "oversocialized" to describe such people.

Oversocialization can lead to low self-esteem, a sense of powerlessness, defeatism, guilt, etc. One of the most important means by which our society socializes children is by making them feel ashamed of behavior or speech that is contrary to society's expectations. If this is overdone, or if a particular child is especially susceptible to such feelings, he ends by feeling ashamed of HIMSELF. Moreover the thought and the behavior of the oversocialized person are more restricted by society's expectations than are those of the lightly socialized person. The majority of people engage in a significant amount of naughty behavior. They

lie, they commit petty thefts, they break traffic laws, they goof off at work, they hate someone, they say spiteful things or they use some underhanded trick to get ahead of the other guy. The oversocialized person cannot do these things, or if he does do them he generates in himself a sense of shame and self-hatred. The oversocialized person cannot even experience, without guilt, thoughts or feelings that are contrary to the accepted morality; he cannot think "unclean" thoughts. And socialization is not just a matter of morality; we are socialized to conform to many norms of behavior that do not fall under the heading of morality. Thus the oversocialized person is kept on a psychological leash and spends his life running on rails that society has laid down for him. In many oversocialized people this results in a sense of constraint and powerlessness that can be a severe hardship. We suggest that oversocialization is among the more serious cruelties that human beings inflict on one another.

Reader's evaluation: *Mr. Kaczynski's essay is well developed, displays an impressive vocabulary, and makes good use of supporting examples. He also demonstrates an understanding of how to use simple, compound, and complex sentences. Grade: 6 out of 6* ■

John Katzman, Andy Lutz, and Erik Olson are the CEO, the vice-president of research and development, and the director of publications, respectively, at *The Princeton Review*.



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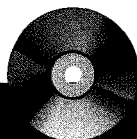
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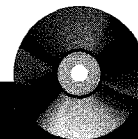
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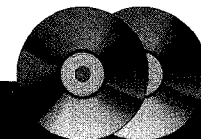
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BOOKS & CRITICS

THIS MONTH:

Great Scot

Almost nobody reads the novels of John Buchan anymore—but they should. Buchan is the father of the modern spy thriller. Christopher Hitchens reviews a new biography of Buchan by Andrew Lowmie. PAGE 104

Fortress of Solitude

The Rules of Engagement, by Anita Brookner, reviewed by Elizabeth Judd PAGE 107

Life Sentence

The Amateur Marriage, by Anne Tyler, reviewed by Christina Schwarz PAGE 108

How Serfdom Saved the Women's Movement

"Get a bunch of professional-class mothers together, and they will freely admit that day care sucks; get a nanny." Caitlin Flanagan examines a host of new books on working mothers and their hired help. PAGE 109

Dependents

"I overheard my weekend employer say, 'Every woman I know worries more about her nanny's Christmas present than her husband's.'" A short story by Mona Simpson. PAGE 129

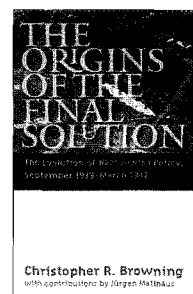
NEW & NOTEWORTHY

The war that never ends

BY BENJAMIN SCHWARZ

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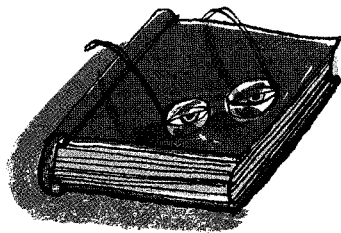
Inexorably they invade publishers' lists. Relentlessly they occupy the bookstores. Overwhelmingly they seize the commanding heights of night tables (at least on the husband's side of the bed). Books on the Second World War. Of course, most of them are abysmal. But the war is, as John Keegan has written, "the largest single event in human history." It started with cavalry charges on the plains of Poland and ended with the atomic bomb. It ranged from the Arctic to Burma. It embraced nearly every conceivable dimension of organized human activity, at the most sophisticated and the most depraved levels. It consumed more than 60 million lives. There is no richer subject. In the past few years we've praised the best current titles about the war (Peter Schrijvers's *The GI War Against Japan* and Robert Gildea's *Marianne in Chains*, for example), revisited a few of the most lasting works (Evelyn Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy, among others), and even excoriated some of the more sentimentalized books (see "The Real War," June 2001 *Atlantic*). This spring brings a new crop of titles—some notable, and this one, which is extraordinary. Browning's is the first volume of Nebraska's authoritative and monumental Comprehensive History of the Holocaust, a series of at least fifteen volumes to be published over the next decade (this and two other volumes will examine Nazi policy; most of the remaining ones will assess the impact of that policy on each of the national Jewish communities in Europe). This book, which opens with the German conquest of Poland, in September of 1939, and ends with the first deportations of Jews to the death camps, in the spring of 1942, will almost certainly be the most important. Browning—one of the world's greatest scholars of the Holocaust, and the author of the meticulous, nuanced, and disturbing *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*—has taken on the most contentious and knotty aspect of the Final Solution: how and why Nazi policy evolved, in the brief period between the autumn of 1939 and the autumn of 1941, from the persecution and planned expulsion of Jews to the detailed strategy of systematically murdering all Jews within Germany's grasp. (Debate on this topic has engendered a highly publicized, sometimes contrived, and increasingly arcane



THE ORIGINS OF THE FINAL SOLUTION

by Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus
University of Nebraska Press

argument between historians in the “intentionalist” camp, who hold that from the 1920s onward Hitler intended to kill the Jews, and those in the “functionalist” camp, who argue that the Holocaust evolved piecemeal, as one set of opportunities and policies led to another.) This is a maddeningly convoluted question—the scholar must distinguish ideological pronouncements from the implementation of policy; the acts of, say, frontline SS units from the plans and intentions of the Nazi leadership; the roots and manifestations of murderous anti-Bolshevism from those of murderous anti-Semitism (to give but a few examples). This historical thicket is rendered all but impenetrable by the facts that, as Browning lucidly and vividly demonstrates, German anti-Semitism was hardly a fixed concept but, rather, evolved and mutated with the ever shifting circumstances; that the Nazi regime and its chains of command and decision were highly decentralized—which meant that at any given moment the interpretations and conceptions of, say, Goebbels and Rosenberg concerning the timing and realization of the Final Solution could vary significantly from those of Himmler and Heydrich; and, most important, that the documentary evidence is both vast and frustratingly incomplete. Scholars sometimes seem loath to acknowledge this last point, for fear that Holocaust deniers will use such recognition to support their contentions. But in trying to reconstruct and impose some narrative order on a tortuous set of political, military, bureaucratic, and administrative processes, the historian confronts gap after gap, because the relevant files of Himmler and Heydrich, the main architects of the Final Solution, were destroyed; we’re left, Browning explains, “with copies of a few key papers . . . that Himmler and Heydrich sent to others, but not with the vital internal working papers at the coordinating center.” This means that much of the story this book sets out to tell must, perforce, be a matter of informed speculation. Here is where Browning



triumphs. He’s obviously mastered every pertinent document available—from archives in Germany, the United States, the former Soviet Union, and Israel—and assimilated them all into his sometimes day-by-day account of the development of Nazi policy. In sifting the evidence he makes clear what’s known and what’s not, what’s probable, what’s possible, and what’s unlikely; with rigor and an unusually incisive writing style he places events, decisions, and debates in a precise historical context, paying heed both to strict chronology and to more amorphous considerations, such as the relationship between Germany’s military fortunes in the East and shifts in the German public’s and the Nazi hierarchy’s mood and outlook. And above all, with exactitude he lays bare his own suppositions as he transparently builds his arguments and his narrative. A masterpiece of the historian’s art, Browning’s work should also force those scholars still contending with

the rival concepts of functionalism and intentionalism to pursue more-fruitful arguments. He convincingly demonstrates that Hitler’s abiding obsession with solving “the Jewish question”

spurred the regime to ever more radical and comprehensive measures (and that the Führer participated in and approved of all major changes in policy toward the Jews). But he shows equally clearly that those changes in policy were often highly contingent and improvised. Perhaps most important, Browning sets what the Nazis called their “war of destruction” against the Soviet Union at the very center of his story. For all the executions and vicious abuse of Jews in Poland, for all of Hitler’s nebulous exhortations and prophecies, it was the unprecedented scale, scope, and ferocity of Germany’s race war on the Eastern Front—the mass murder there of millions of non-Jews and Jews alike—that truly radicalized Nazi policy and crystallized the vision of exterminating European Jewry. Browning inextricably links the history of the Holocaust to the history of the war itself (obvious as

this approach may seem, the scholarly field of “Holocaust studies” has often drifted far from examination of the Second World War). His work serves as another reminder that if the war is the hinge of modern history, the hinge of the war was the epic clash in the East—the main scene of the Nazis’ defeat and the largest and most terrible conflict mankind has yet fought.

REPORT FROM A PARISIAN PARADISE, by Joseph Roth (Norton). Most renowned today as the author of the novel *The Radetzky March*, Roth—who was born in Austria-Hungary and launched his literary career in Berlin—was one of Europe’s great newspapermen in the years between the wars. This book collects his lyrical, often rhapsodizing, journalistic sketches of France, a country that for him represented everything Germany was not, even before the Nazis rose to power. Taken together, these pieces mix nostalgia for a civilized, tolerant, and (Roth knew) doomed Europe with contempt for the Germans—a people, he wrote (prophetically, long before the orchestras at Auschwitz), who “have always had the gift of killing to music.”

DRESDEN, by Frederick Taylor (Harper-Collins). Displaying a chronic obtuseness, along with an unlovely tendency toward self-pity and self-righteousness, more and more Germans have recently taken to seeing themselves as victims of atrocities inflicted by the Allied air campaign against them during the Second World War. In the German, the British, and the American popular mind, the greatest crime of that campaign was the RAF’s February 1945 firebombing of Dresden, an exquisite Baroque city dubbed “Florence on the Elbe.” The Nazis’ own propaganda machine largely manufactured the raid’s infamy: immediately after the attack Goebbels wildly exaggerated the number of dead and falsely claimed that the city was of no military significance. The truth, though, is horrifying enough. In a single night British planes dropped more than 2,600 tons of explosives that incinerated, blew apart, or suffocated more than 25,000 people—overwhelmingly civilians, mostly women, children, and the elderly, many of whom

were refugees from the Soviets' dreadful onslaught immediately to the east. This story has been told before: the notorious David Irving wrote the best previous history in English, in which he characteristically mixed brilliant scholarship with tendentious assertions. Although flabby, Taylor's chronicle nevertheless makes for compelling reading, owing both to his chilling depiction of that surreal and horrible night and to the obvious moral seriousness he uses to grapple with the ambiguities at the heart of his account. His publishers seem intent on marketing the book as a revisionist work; and indeed, in his careful way Taylor undercuts the simplistic view of the Dresden attack specifically, and of the Allies' air war generally, that too many Germans (and readers of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*) embrace. Although little in his book will surprise experts, Taylor points out that Dresdeners were particularly keen supporters of the Nazis and that their city, a key transportation and communications hub, housed a number of important and technologically sophisticated war industries (which employed Jewish slave labor). He concomitantly argues that the raid primarily aimed not to terrorize but to disrupt the movement of troops and materiel to the Eastern Front. He also reminds readers that the Luftwaffe killed more than 40,000 British civilians overall, and that in just four days 40,000 Russians died in the German air raid on Stalingrad in August 1942 (before the siege of the city). Nevertheless, Taylor is hardly an apologist for the firebombing; rather, he puts the assault in its proper context to reveal the inherent moral tangle of total war. He allows that the Allies' bombing war killed half a million Germans (the Luftwaffe's bombing killed about the same number of Russians), but, drawing on the sophisticated assessments of a generation of scholars, he details how it also indisputably vitiated Germany's ability to wage war. Moreover, the raid on Dresden, in its tactics and targeting, was typical of both other Allied and German raids; it was unusually awful only because of a confluence of factors, including the local authorities' neglect of air-raid

precautions and, most important, the rare, near perfect weather over the city (it was "the raid which went horribly right"). Its timing, too, accounts for its singular notoriety. The 1943 firestorm ignited by the RAF's bombers in Hamburg (the subject of Martin Middlebrook's unsurpassed account of the terror of the bombing war, *The Battle of Hamburg*) blasted and burned far more people (at least 40,000), but at that time the Nazis were trying to obscure, not publicize, the consequences of Allied bombs. Dresden was neither an innocent burg devoted solely to culture and the arts, as many in Germany today would have it, nor a "mass of munitions works," as the head of the RAF's Bomber Command, Arthur Harris, protested rather too defensively after the raid. It was merely—and to the Allies, most threateningly—a "normally functioning city," as Taylor nicely puts it. Which meant that given the terrible terms on which the war was fought by both sides, and that cloudless sky on that February night, its fate was sealed.

BURYING CAESAR, by Graham Stewart (Overlook). Stewart, a young and remarkably talented British historian, has taken those tirelessly examined subjects, "appeasement" and the impact of Hitler on British politics in the 1930s, and actually written a bold and invigorating book, which has recently come out in paperback after being all but ignored (on this side of the Atlantic) in hardcover. In focusing on the rivalry between Neville Chamberlain and Churchill (his volume supplants Robert Rhodes James's *Churchill: A Study in Failure* as the smartest account of Churchill's political career in the 1930s), he was obviously inspired by the often dazzling revisionist (read, to put it crudely, anti-Churchill and pro-appeasement) analyses of such historians as John Charmley and Maurice Cowling. But in fact his subtle and deeply researched examination tilts quite strongly to the Churchillian side, even as he fully grasps the terrible dilemmas confronting the Baldwin and Chamberlain governments as they sought to protect Britain's far-flung global interests (threatened by three powerful aggressors in three differ-

ent theaters) with extremely limited financial and military means—and even as he shows why in the 1930s Churchill's party and country quite justifiably regarded him as a self-promoting and untrustworthy bungler, whose bravado could easily lead to catastrophe.

INSIDE HITLER'S BUNKER, by Joachim Fest (Farrar Straus & Giroux). As British and American bombers and Red Army artillery pulverized his capital and its inhabitants above him, and as his hated enemy, the Russians, closed in for their most terrible revenge, Hitler, deep in his troglodytic warren beneath the Reich Chancellery, ordered nonexistent armies into battle, operatically railed against old foes (Churchill, the Jews, the Bolsheviks) and new ones (those members of his court who were scurrying to safety or to cut their own deals), and prepared to die. It's a stupendous story, and Fest, one of Germany's renowned historians of the Nazis, tells it well. But it's been told better before. Or, rather, both stories have, because Fest focuses equally on Hitler's end in his bunker and on the apocalypse in Berlin above. For the former, read instead Hugh Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler*, still unrivaled in its elegance and insight (Fest fills in a few minor gaps in Trevor-Roper's account); for the latter, Antony Beevor's *The Fall of Berlin, 1945*, among the most terrifying works of history ever penned.

LONDON: LIFE IN THE POST-WAR YEARS, by Douglas Whitworth (Trafalgar Square/Tempus). London emerged from the war less triumphant than depleted and sad. This poignant collection of photographs reveals the conflict's most conspicuous ravages—the bombed-out blocks, the gutted Wren churches, the lone spires that survived the Blitz. But it's most telling when it captures the drab exhaustion and wistful pride of the period, with its worn clothes and gray complexions, its shabby efforts to deck things out, its Coldstream Guards in khaki, denuded of their resplendent tunics. Only David Lean's movie *Brief Encounter* has more strikingly—and heartbreakingly—captured postwar Britain's dingy austerity. ■ Benjamin Schwarz is the literary editor of The Atlantic.

GREAT SCOT

*Between Kipling and Fleming stands John Buchan,
the father of the modern spy thriller*

BY CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

.....

"There is a dry wind blowing through the East, and the parched grasses wait the spark." I can remember the frisson I felt when I first read that line, as I can recall the faint sense of absurdity that accompanied the thrill. People don't really talk like that, as I half understood when I was twelve, but then, they don't really talk like Kipling's believable soldiers either. The words—which occur in the opening pages of John Buchan's *Greenmantle*—are uttered in a secret office near Whitehall, in London, as Sir Walter Bullivant briefs Richard Hannay on the extreme hazard and implausibility of his upcoming mission to save the empire. Even at that age I preferred Bullivant's style to the affected gruffness of "M" as he summoned Commander James Bond to a confidential session on the newest Red Menace supervillain.

In several respects Buchan is as different from Fleming as chalk is from cheese. The hero Hannay is uninterested in sex, revolted by all forms of cruelty, and ill at ease in the modern world of cleverness and greed and deceit. He is a late-Edwardian version of the strong, silent type that upheld chivalric values while playing "The Great Game," and he is doomed to see most of his friends immolated in the trenches of the Western Front. But Buchan spanned the gap between Kipling and Fleming, and his stories furnished a crossover point for beginning readers between the straightforward "adventure" book and something resembling the adult novel. I like to think that they still do, and this in spite of their occasional preposterousness ("There are some things," Hannay reflects near the beginning of *Mr. Standfast*,

"that no one has a right to ask of any white man").

Buchan's following in America probably derives chiefly from *The Thirty-Nine Steps*—the first of the Hannay tales, and the one that was famously transferred to celluloid by Alfred Hitchcock. Here

one has a very well shaped thriller, with many vertiginous shifts of plot and scene, a dastardly set of foes, and a game played for exceedingly high stakes. The reliance on coincidence or the fortuitous

is often questionable, but the results at the same time are never quite incredible. And the hero is, as I hinted before, more of an innocent abroad than a cal-

**JOHN BUCHAN:
THE PRESBYTERIAN
CAVALIER**

by Andrew Lownie
David R. Godine



In the movie of John Buchan's The Thirty-Nine Steps, Richard Hannay finds the man with the missing finger

culating agent. He is actuated principally by loyalty, either to friends or to country, and when he meets sheer evil, he is often baffled as well as repelled. This innocence may or may not be the counterpart of his creator's rather alarming sense of integrity. What is a modern and wised-up reader to make, for example, of Hannay's encounter (again in *Mr. Standfast*) with the lovely Mary Lamington: "I didn't even think of her as pretty, any more than a man thinks of the good looks of the friend

he worships"? Since Mary is also described as having a boylike grace of movement, even the least jaded attention is inevitably drawn to what is apparently being disowned. We do not nowadays think of the British Secret Service as a place where the polymorphously perverse was unknown.

One of the merits of Niall Ferguson's recent work on the British Empire is the reminder it provides of how Scottish that empire was. Not only did the Scots provide a vast proportion of the soldiers and miners and ship's engineers of the system (I have seen it argued that Scotty on *Star Trek* is a tribute to this grand tradition), but several colonies bore a distinctly Caledonian stamp. Even today a visitor to New Zealand or Canada is bound to notice the influence of Scottish architecture and of the Scottish educational and religious heritage; and in the Cameron Highlands of Malaysia, and the city of Blantyre, in Malawi, the imprint of Scotland is to be felt in numerous distinctive ways. The battle flag of the Confederacy, indeed, displayed the cross of Saint Andrew; and I recently read an account of the revolution in Texas in which one of the proclamations under discussion featured a stirring line from the poetry of Robert Burns—the more impressive because it was unattributed and assumed to be familiar in the context.

Scotland, Christianity, and empire were the air in which Buchan moved. Born to a struggling minister of the Free Church of Scotland (a congregation that had seceded from the established local church and stood for a flinty Calvinism), he revered the epic story of David Livingstone as a missionary in Africa, went out to serve as a member of Sir Alfred Milner's governing team during and after the Boer War, was elected to Parliament as a Scottish member (on a liberal Conservative and Ulster Unionist platform), and ended his days in 1940 with the title of Lord Tweedsmuir and the office of governor-general of Canada. In his fiction Highland and Lowland dialects are employed in almost every

chapter, and there are recurrent allusions to Scottish vernacular poetry and song.

The famous contrast in the Scottish character is between the dour, stoic, and economical and the romantic, passionate, and rebellious. Buchan was a salient instance of this contradiction, which expressed itself mainly in the contrast between his life and his writing. He was continent in all matters; punctilious as to time and bookkeeping; deeply attached to his national Church; and a tightly buttoned scholar, civil servant, politician, and diplomat. His every leisure moment was devoted to writing, with an output of novels, biographies, and histories that amounted to graphomania. His chief recreational outlets were riding, climbing, and walking. An ulcerated stomach compelled a strict dietary regime. No breath of scandal touched his public or private life. His attitude to authority and empire was trustful and loyal. But his writing shows an attraction first to the exotic and the numinous, and second to the underdog, the rebel, and the outsider. In many of his novels there are mysterious and evil women with hypnotic, magical properties—including the bewitching Hilda von Einem, in *Greenmantle*, and a female in *The Three Hostages* whose hands “were laid on the arms of the chair”; “hands more delicate and shapely I have never seen, though they had also the suggestion of a furious power, like the talons of a bird of prey.”

The occult, especially as it derives from the East or from Africa, provides a continual undertone of fascination, attractive and repulsive in almost equal degrees. In a remarkable short story, “The Grove of Ashtaroth,” the hero finds himself obliged to destroy the gorgeous little temple of a sensual cult, because he believes that by doing so he will salvage the health and sanity of a friend. But he simultaneously believes himself to be committing an unpardonable act of desecration, and the eerie voice that beseeches him to stay his hand is unmistakably feminine.

In a not dissimilar way Buchan found himself admiring the spirit of the defeated Boers, who with their stern Calvinism and equestrian tactics may have reminded him of clan fighters on

the Scottish borders. One of his best-drawn fictional heroes is the Afrikaner tracker Peter Pienaar, Richard Hannay’s tough and self-sacrificing sidekick in three of the novels. Buchan wrote and rewrote a biography of the Marquis of Montrose, the seventeenth-century Scot who was perhaps best described as a Presbyterian Cavalier—the same coincidence of qualities that lends Andrew Lownie’s new biography its subtitle. And when put in charge of British propaganda during World War I, he made space for something more than a footnote in history by recommending that the American journalist Lowell Thomas go and see T. E. Lawrence. Buchan and Lawrence became close after the war; they shared an interest in the classics and an admiration for Montrose. But their concepts of asceticism and mortification were more discrepant than Buchan can possibly have guessed.

Buchan used to be far more readily acknowledged as the father of the spy thriller than he is today. Reviewing his last novel, *Sick Heart River*, in 1940, Graham Greene wrote, “What is remarkable about these adventure-stories is the completeness of the world they describe.” He also pointed out that Buchan was the first to realize “the enormous dramatic value of adventure in familiar surroundings happening to unadventurous men ... the death that may come to us by the railings of the Park.” And the impress of Buchan on Greene’s early work is plain enough. However, when Greene came to write his memoir *Ways of Escape*, forty years later, he recorded that by the time he sat down to begin *This Gun for Hire*, he “could no longer get the same pleasure from the adventures of Richard Hannay.”

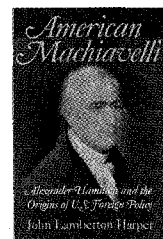
More than the dialogue and the situation had dated: the moral climate was no longer that of my boyhood. Patriotism had lost its appeal, even for a schoolboy, at Passchendaele ... It was no longer a Buchan world.

This is a less persuasive account of disillusionment than it appears on the surface. Buchan’s most celebrated thrillers were written and published during the awfulness of World War I and the reaction to it that set in: *The*

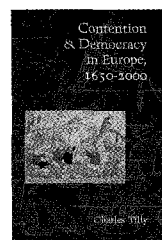
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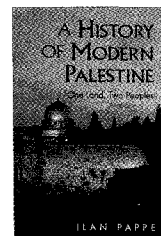
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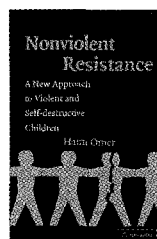
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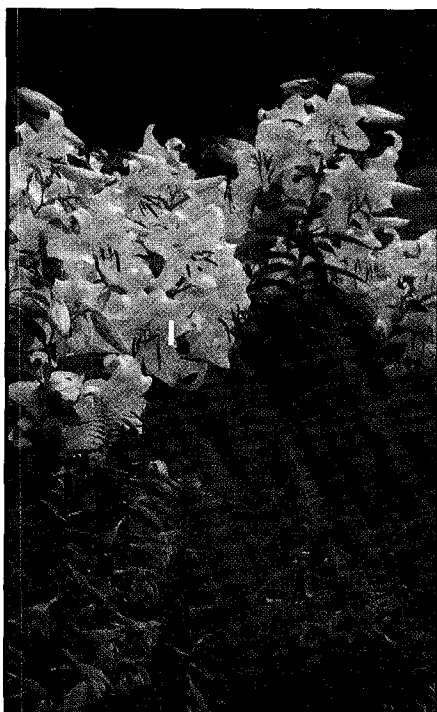
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Thirty-Nine Steps in 1915, *Greenmantle* in 1916, and *Mr. Standfast* in 1919. The conflict is not presented as straightforwardly Manichaean: gallantry is attributed to Germans and to Turks. Moreover, it was a fact of Buchan's life that he had many friends among the Red and anti-imperialist leaders on the proletarian Clydeside, and that he tried to do honor to these antagonists both in his novels and in his public speeches. Even when the spy genre itself became a near synonym for cynicism, John le Carré had his George Smiley adopt the nom de guerre "Mr. Standfast"—and he would not, I think, take refuge in the claim that the name comes from *Pilgrim's Progress* in the first place. Buchan took Bunyan as a pattern in much of his writing, and his fine autobiography, *Memory Hold-the-Door*, was published in North America under the title *Pilgrim's Way*. It has been almost forty years since the first biography, by the Scottish writer Janet Adam Smith, was published; this more recent effort, by another Scot, is intended to acquit Buchan of charges of bigotry and also of obsolescence. (Mr. Lownie is in some respects as straight-faced and innocent as his subject: he records with perfect gravity that in 1931 Buchan agreed to become president of the Federation of University Conservative and Unionist Associations, a body with initials that were not amended for some years.)

As Lownie points out, one respect in which this is more a "Buchan world" than the formerly up-to-date might be willing to credit is this: Buchan understood very early that the United States would become the decisive actor. The rather cardboard American who comes to Hannay's aid in *Greenmantle*, a fat and rich but nonetheless brave and humorous figure named John Scantlebury Blenkiron, is included for no other purpose than to make this point. As Canada's governor-general in the late 1930s, Buchan made every attempt to establish cordial relations with President Franklin Roosevelt. (It was a contradiction in this posture that he disliked Winston Churchill and tended to favor appeasement, but it's also clear that his dread of a second world war was conditioned above all by the shudder he experienced when contemplating the first one.)

Like Greene and Evelyn Waugh and many others of the period, Buchan has been accused of anti-Semitism. Two defenses have frequently been offered in these cases: that the alleged anti-Semite harbored a prejudice no greater than was commonplace at the time, and that he had many Jewish friends. A third possibility—that the offending words are uttered by fictional characters and not by the author—is sometimes canvassed. None of these will quite do in Buchan's case. It's not merely that anti-Jewish clichés occur in his books; it's that they occur so frequently. The usual form they take is a reference to Judeo-Bolshevism—the sympathy of Jews, even rich ones, for the Russian Revolution. That, however, might be described as political anti-Semitism, just as Buchan's energetic support for the early Zionist movement might be called political philo-Semitism. Paradoxically, perhaps, Buchan greatly disliked as a person the most anti-Jewish and pro-Zionist figure of his day, Arthur Balfour. Indeed, Balfour was the basis for the villain Andrew Lumley in Buchan's first thriller, *The Power House*. I mention this for two reasons. First, the book describes an invisible, string-pulling, sinister secret government, but one run by English lords and financiers rather than exotic or cosmopolitan types. Second, Buchan openly admitted that his model in the writing of it (he called the novel "a tribute at the shrine of my master in fiction") was E. Phillips Oppenheim, whom he further described—in an instance, perhaps, of trying too hard—as "the greatest Jewish writer since Isaiah." In "The Grove of Ashtaroth" the friend for whom the purgative enterprise is undertaken is a man described by the narrator as a Jew trying to "pass," who because of his ancestry is vulnerable to the delicious temptations of strange gods. This is excessive on Buchan's part, and arguably a "transferred" aspect of that very element in himself: the element of the mystical and the bizarre that the Scots call "fey."

The same ambivalence can be detected in *Greenmantle*, which is certainly his masterpiece. Here the subject is *jihad*. As a wartime propaganda officer, Buchan was fascinated by the ability of Germany

to use its Turkish allies to enlist Muslim sentiment against the British Empire. The words of Sir Walter Bullivant with which I opened occur in their context thus:

"Though the Kaiser proclaims a Holy War and calls himself Hadji Mohammed Guillermo, and says the Hohenzollerns are descended from the Prophet, that seems to have fallen pretty flat. The ordinary man again will answer that Islam in Turkey is becoming a back number, and that Krupp guns are the new gods. Yet—I don't know. I do not quite believe in Islam becoming a back number ... The Syrian army is as fanatical as the hordes of the Mahdi. The Senussi have taken a hand in the game. The Persian Moslems are threatening trouble. There is a dry wind blowing through the East, and the parched grasses wait the spark. And that wind is blowing towards the Indian border."

Despite this Whitehall Orientalism, when Hannay gets out into the field he is astonished to find his gallant friend Sandy Arbuthnot—the ideal blend of Scots daredevil and *Gunga Din* special agent—half convinced that the Muslim zealots are in the right.

"The West knows nothing of the true Oriental. It pictures him as lapped in color and idleness and luxury and gorgeous dreams. But it is all wrong ... It is the austerity of the East that is its beauty and its terror ... They want to live face to face with God without a screen of ritual and images and priestcraft."

This capacity for vicarious identification—even imaginative sympathy—was Buchan's most sterling quality as a man and as an author. And it was in order to ignite the spark of Islam pre-emptively, so to speak, and to set the parched Eastern grasses afire in a way that the Ottoman Empire did not expect, that Lawrence was sent to Arabia in the first place. So we do indeed inhabit a world partly shaped by a dogged Scots puritan, and we may even discover—or rediscover—that Buchan's invocations of grit and pluck and hardihood are not as mockably retrograde as all that. **A**

Christopher Hitchens is a contributing editor of The Atlantic and a columnist for Vanity Fair. His book A Long Short War: The Postponed Liberation of Iraq was published last fall.

NEW FICTION

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

BY ELIZABETH JUDD

.....

Edith Hope, the heroine of Anita Brookner's Booker Prize-winning *Hotel du Lac* (1984), wrote conventional romance novels based on Aesop's tortoise and hare, while acknowledging that "it is the hare who wins" in real life. "Every time." Cynical, yes, but the knowing *Hotel du Lac* still nestles cozily within the traditions of a love story. Brookner has now published her twenty-second novel, and she no longer provides an ounce of consolation to the "tortoise market." Instead, the acerbic, perverse, and preternaturally compelling narrator of *The Rules of Engagement* revels in dignified misery, dismissing those who



THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

by Anita Brookner

Random House

yearn for happiness as either monstrous or emotionally stunted. Among Brookner's characters there has not been a Hope for more than a decade. Her latest protagonist, the aptly named Elizabeth Wetherall, has endured much and honed any lingering expectations into something disturbingly modest: "One's sad longings might be, and usually were, unsatisfied, so that if one were lucky they merely receded, but remained subject to conjecture."

Having married an older man and succumbed to dutiful routine, Elizabeth measures herself against a meek and plodding childhood friend named Betsy. Loyalty, we're informed, is Betsy's besetting sin. Over the years she naively demands the fulfillment that Elizabeth proudly rejects. The two women share a married lover, a coinci-

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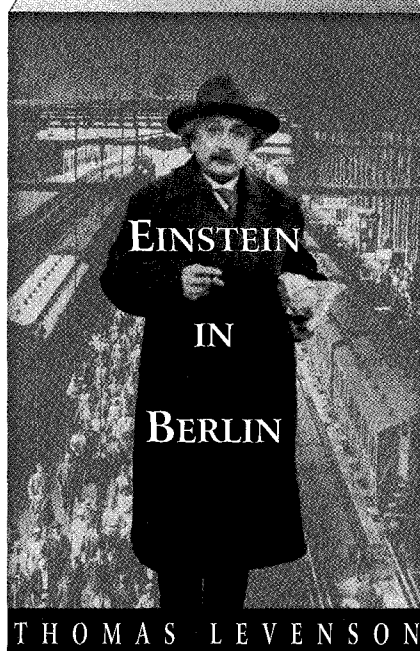
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dence that Elizabeth, secure in her superiority, never reveals to her friend. Although Elizabeth soon renounces the man with a few eloquent gestures, Betsy insinuates herself into his family circle, threatening the decorum that Elizabeth so stringently observes. Like other Brookner heroines, the "unwillingly independent" Elizabeth perseveres in her own frigid stasis, reserving her sharpest critiques for Betsy, whom she disdains for her "bizarre sincerity, the sheer incomprehension of a woman whom experience had taught so little as to make her seem anomalous, even threatening, like a dysfunctional infant who persists in courting one's approval."

It's hard to imagine what someone would make of this beautifully written novel—with its emphasis on heightened but unexpressed emotions—if it were an introduction to Brookner. With each slender volume she fleshes out a constant vision of ever constricting solitude—an isolation from children, current events, religion, desire, and, in Elizabeth's case, literature, too—that grows more intriguing with each new gloss. What's clear is that like Joseph Cornell's boxes and Nicholson Baker's paeans to card catalogues, nail clippers, and other everyday objects, Brookner's novels have become obsessive miniatures that work best if you accept them on their own strange terms. Austere and dyspeptic, *The Rules of Engagement* demonstrates the triumph of a keenly introspective mind. For true fans, Brookner's books manage to generate boundless excitement while relying on nothing beyond the writer's formidable intelligence, a denatured energy that can't be contained despite the best efforts of her stupendously repressed characters.

LIFE SENTENCE

BY CHRISTINA SCHWARZ

.....

In this story of two good people who make each other miserable, Tyler eschews her stock of whimsical oddballs and instead brings her famed empathy to bear on strikingly realistic characters. The union of Pauline and Michael Anton—she so impulsive, he so careful—is

that of the Morans of *Breathing Lessons* in a minor key. They marry during World War II because she looks pretty in a red coat and he's adept with a bandage, and in this ill-advised romanticism they are no different from lots of happy couples—except that Pauline and Michael can't stop, as Michael sees it, a "constant elbowing and competing, jockeying for position, glorying in I-told-you-so." By shifting point of view between the two, Tyler manages the immensely tricky feat of exposing their unpleasantness to each other while making them both likeable to the reader.

If only he'd shrug off her hasty words and cherish her vitality! If only she wouldn't indulge her every emotion and would treasure his unswerving decency! But Tyler won't let people behave out of character; Michael and Pauline remain stubbornly true to themselves, though we all would be happier otherwise. In her deliberate, unadorned, butter-smooth prose, unwrapping a telling moment here and there, Tyler works through sixty years, time enough for rending events to become part of the fabric of life. Crises are overwhelmed in the end by personality, ever the focus of her brilliance. The jacket blurb claims that the book shows the consequences of a bad marriage; but although it's clear why the characters might behave as they do, nothing here, as in most of real life, feels ineluctable. It's not why they do but, rather, how they respond once the deed is done that interests Tyler. And as always, the people she cares about are those who care profoundly and unshakably, no matter what happens, about others.



THE AMATEUR MARRIAGE

by Anne Tyler
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HOW SERFDOM SAVED THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Dispatches from the nanny wars

BY CAITLIN FLANAGAN

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When my twin sons were babies, we lived a block away from a day-care center, and just as I was setting out with the stroller for the first walk of the day—usually at 7:30, right after the first segment of the *Today* show ended—I would see mothers dropping off their children, many of whom were infants no older than mine. I'd slow down as I passed, taking an interested look at these mothers, who were always in such a rush, bogged down with diaper bags and teddy bears, and then I would walk on, headed for the park. The long, long day would begin to unfold: the walk, the end of the *Today* show, the morning nap, lunch, another walk, the afternoon nap, two solid hours of MSNBC (sometimes more), and then, at five or so, the last walk of the day. Often I would see the same mothers picking up the babies I'd seen dropped off ten hours before, and I would marvel at the sight. In fact, I sort of planned my day around it: it was my little treat. *Think of all they've missed*, I would say smugly to myself. I felt in every way superior to them: every day while they had been miles away from their babies, I'd been right there with mine, catching every little smile, writing down every advance—rolling over! eating a bit of mashed banana!—on the lined ivory pages of their baby books, importantly calling the pediatrician if anything seemed slightly awry. That so much of the day had been tedious and (truth be told) mildly depressing was itself a badge of honor. Unlike those women parking their kids in day care while they went to work, I was a mother virtuously willing to sacrifice her own happiness for the sake of her children, and being rewarded with the ultimate prize: I wasn't missing a moment of their fleeting, precious, and unrecoverable childhoods.

It was entirely snotty and rude and most of all silly for me to have this attitude toward those mothers. In the first place, the day-care center was in no way

tony, nor were the cars that pulled up to it in any way luxurious; I'll bet that all those mothers worked more because of economic necessity than because of a desire for professional advancement or emotional fulfillment. More to the point, a majority of my sainted hours noting every little moue of delight or displeasure that crossed my children's faces were spent in the company of a highly

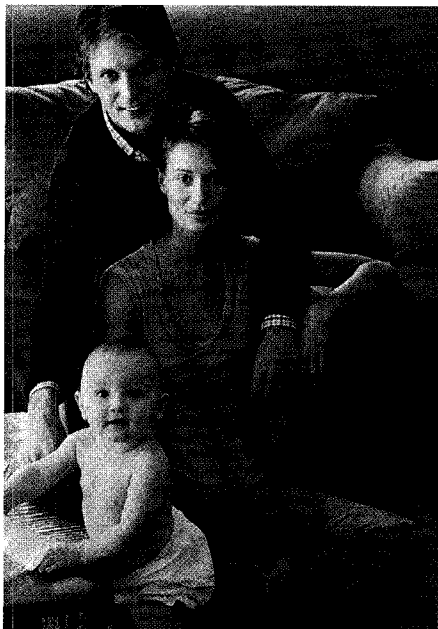


capable and very industrious nanny who did all of the hard stuff. There was no need for me to be moping around the apartment all day; I really could have lightened up and had a little more fun, clicked off the TV and gone to the movies or lunch or shopping. But I felt anxious about the whole thing—very, very anxious. If I was going to stake out my turf as an “at-home mother,” putting all my worldly promise in cold storage to do it, didn't I have to actually stay home? Fifty years ago a young matron lucky enough to have household help

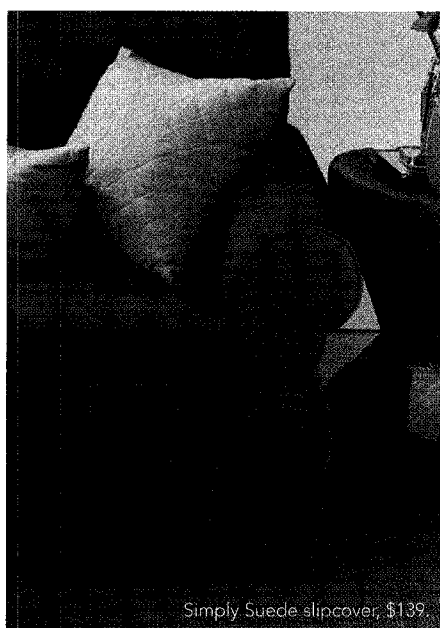
would have been up and dressed and off to the department store or the library guild or the dry cleaner's by midmorning, and no one would have questioned her inclinations as far as motherhood was concerned. But now, of course, the situation is so fraught with four decades' worth of female advance and retreat that almost any decision a woman makes about child care is liable to get her blasted by one faction or the other. Standing bravely in the crossfire are nannies, who tend to be the first choice of professional-class mothers who work (so much better than day care—the baby is still being raised in his own home, according to his mother's deeply

considered specifications) and the guilty luxury of a good number of at-home mothers. And, as many of us have learned, the mother-nanny relationship has the potential for being the most morally, legally, and emotionally charged one that a middle-class woman will ever have.

I didn't know a single child who had a nanny when I was growing up. Nannies existed in English nursery rhymes and children's stories, in *Mary Poppins* and *Peter Pan*. The Brady Bunch, of



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course, had Alice, but she seemed to be part and parcel of the double family tragedy, never even alluded to, that had brought them all together. *The Courtship of Eddie's Father* had Mrs. Livingston, but again: tragedy. My father was always very proud of a scar on his right elbow, which he had received at the hands of an incompetent nurse who scalded him in the bath when he was an infant, and whom my grandfather had sent packing that very day. The scar proved to my father that his family had once been a tiny bit grand; it proved to me that he had been born a long, long time ago: a nurse? When I was growing up, in Berkeley in the 1960s, faculty wives—which is what my mother was—stayed home, kept house, and raised children. When my mother died, I gave a maudlin eulogy about all the days we spent together when I was small, shopping at Hink's department store and eating peeled apricots and lying down for naps in the big bed under the gable window of her bedroom. I probably should have found something more estimable to say about her, but in the days after her death all I could think about was what a wonderful thing it had been to be raised at home, by a mother who loved me. But by the 1970s, of course, the idyll was coming to an end; many of the younger wives had begun to want out. I remember being sent in 1977, at age fifteen, to my very first psychotherapist, a young wife and mother with a capacious office on Bancroft Avenue. I can't remember a thing I talked about on all those darkening afternoons, but I do remember very clearly a day on which she suddenly sat up straight in her chair and began discussing, for reasons I could not fathom and in the most heated terms imaginable, not the vagaries of my sullen adolescence but, rather, marriage—specifically, her own. "I mean, who's going to do the shit work?" she asked angrily. "Who's going to make the pancakes?"

I stared at her uncomprehendingly. The only wife I knew intimately was my mother, who certainly had her discontents, but whom I couldn't even imagine using the term "shit work," let alone using it to characterize the making of pancakes—something she did regularly,

competently, and, as far as I could tell, happily (she liked pancakes; so did the rest of us). But in 1978 shit work was becoming a real problem. Shit work, in fact, was threatening to put the brakes on the women's movement. Joan Didion's unparalleled 1972 essay on the movement ("To make an omelette," the essay begins, "you need not only those broken eggs but someone 'oppressed' to break them") described the attempts women of the era made to arrive at an equitable division of household labor:

They totted up the pans scoured, the towels picked off the bathroom floor, the loads of laundry done in a lifetime. Cooking a meal could only be "dog-work," and to claim any pleasure from it was evidence of craven acquiescence in one's own forced labor. Small children could only be odious mechanisms for the spilling and digesting of food, for robbing women of their "freedom." It was a long way from Simone de Beauvoir's grave and awesome recognition of woman's role as "the Other" to the notion that the first step in changing that role was Alix Kates Shulman's marriage contract ("wife strips beds, husband remakes them").

Alix Kates Shulman's marriage contract, which I have read, is so perfectly a document of its time that it might stand alone, a kind of synecdoche for twenty years' worth of arguing and slamming doors and fuming over the notorious inability of husbands to fold a fitted sheet or get the children's breakfast on the table without leaving behind a scrim of crumbs and jelly on every flat surface in the room. Originally published in 1970, in a feminist magazine called *Up From Under*, the contract—like the women's-liberation movement itself—quickly moved from the radical margins of society to its very center: it was reprinted in the debut issue of *Ms.*, no surprise, but also in *Redbook* and *New York* and *Life*, in which it was part of a cover story on the subject of experimental marriages. (That a marriage in which the husband helped out with housework qualified as "experimental" tells you how much things have changed in the past three decades.) It was also taken seriously in some very high quarters, including the standard Harvard textbook on contract law, in which it was reprinted.

The document, which I first encountered when I read the Didion essay as a girl, struck me as odd; I could see how a bride on the eve of her wedding could think ahead to the making and unmaking of beds (although it was only once I was deep into marriage that it occurred to me this task might be a chore, as opposed to yet another delightful aspect of married sexuality, which I could imagine only in the most thrilling terms), but there was other language in it that seemed born of actual and bitter experience. Shulman and her husband, for example, were going to divide “the week into hours during which the children were to address their ‘personal questions’ to either one parent or another.” It was difficult for me to conceive of a bride’s coming up with such a disillusioned view of the thing, even a bride fully alerted to the oppression

inability to bring her to orgasm, an essay that ended with the half jaunty, half exasperated imperative “Think clitoris!” At this point Alix and her husband were apparently seized by the one patently sensible idea of their entire marriage: they needed to get divorced.

Now the story begins to get complicated. In the early seventies there was no such thing as joint custody in the state of New York, and Alix realized that a divorce was not going to be much of a boon to her, since it would leave her with the kids full time, which would mean a heck of a lot of breakfasts to prepare and lunch boxes to pack—activities that would sorely cut into the time available for her to make pronouncements on behalf of the voiceless clitoris. When friends heard about her rotten marriage and asked her when she was going to divorce the bum, she would snappily

against marriage to Norman Mailer makes me half want to hold onto my own copy, just to be on the safe side.) Certainly Shulman has earned herself a spot on almost any short list of very silly people. Yet I am reluctant to make too much sport of her document, or of the countless similar ones that it inspired. I am a wife and mother of young children in a very different time from Shulman’s, a time that is in many respects more brutal and more brutalizing, a time that has been morally coarsening for many of us, a time that has made hypocrites of many contemporary feminists in ways that Shulman and her sisters in arms were not hypocrites. I have never once argued with my husband about which of us was going to change the sheets of the marriage bed, but then—to my certain knowledge—neither one of us ever has changed the sheets. Or scrubbed the bathtubs, or dusted the cobwebs off the top of the living-room bookcase, or used the special mop and the special noncorrosive cleanser on the hardwood floors. Two years ago our little boys got stomach flu, one right after the other, and there were ever so many loads of wash to do, but we did not do them. The nanny did.

How so many middle-class American women went from not wanting to oppress other women to viewing that oppression as a central part of their own liberation—that is a complicated and sorry story. In it you will find the seeds of things we don’t like to discuss much.

of motherhood, but it turns out that Shulman was no bride when she wrote it. I have since learned that her marriage agreement—talk about a doomed cause—was of the postnuptial variety.

Alix Kates Shulman’s marriage—under way a full decade before she sat down at her typewriter, aglow with “feminist irony, idealism, audacity, and glee,” and punched out the notorious contract—had been buffeted by many of the forces at play in American cultural life of the late sixties and early seventies, but she and her husband evinced an impressive ability to up the ante. He worked; she stayed home with the kids and wrote “subversive” essays, short stories, and position papers, all of which centered on her growing desire to come Up From Under. He retaliated by starting a new business venture in another state and taking up with a UC Berkeley student. She double-retaliated by taking a young lover of her own and publishing an essay about her husband’s

reply, “Not until you’re ready to help me take care of my kids.” Thus the marriage agreement—which Shulman originally, and more accurately, wanted to title “A Divorce Dilemma and a Marriage Agreement”—was born, a way to husk the marriage of any pretense of emotional fulfillment and reduce it to a purely labor-sharing arrangement. (Her husband signed it, ran off with his coed, and then—proving himself to be one of the great masochists of the twentieth century—returned to Shulman for another full decade of punishment before they finally switched off the lights.)

The marriage agreement virtually demanded to be ridiculed, and ridiculed it was: not only by Joan Didion but also by Russell Baker and Norman Mailer. (In his 1971 anti-feminist manifesto *The Prisoner of Sex*, Mailer considered the agreement at some length, concluding that he “would not be married to such a woman.” The potential of the agreement to serve as a lifetime protection policy

To get at the larger point here, let us look, for a moment, at a product not of Shulman’s time but of our own. Let us look at a most unremarkable comment in a most unremarkable essay, a comment that, at first blush, does not demand to be made fun of, or even really to be noticed at all, a comment that would not cause the least consternation in the most progressive households, among the most liberated and most liberating women.

Anita Diamant is the author of several novels and works of nonfiction, most notably a runaway best seller called *The Red Tent*, which *The Boston Globe* described as being “what the Bible would be like if it had been written by women.” This past fall she published a collection of personal essays, *Pitching My Tent: On Marriage, Motherhood, Friendship, and Other Leaps of Faith*. In one of them, “Airing It Out,” she describes a marital rough patch that she and her husband struck not long after their only child was born: “Things between us were bad.

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We weren't talking. We weren't kissing. We weren't, well, you know." They went to a marriage counselor, who gave them advice so standard it might have been torn from the pages of one of the family magazines Diamant once wrote for.

By way of "homework" the therapist suggested several commonsense gimmicks. We were to spend ten minutes each evening debriefing about our respective days. We were to take turns and not interrupt each other. He also suggested regular sex dates. Sounds mechanical, but it sure takes the pressure off the rest of the week. And for heaven's sake, said the therapist, if you're fighting about who cleans the bathroom, why not just pay someone else to do it for you?

For heaven's sake. It's a no-brainer. Hiring someone to clean the toilets will certainly put an immediate end to fights about that unpleasant topic. Hiring someone to strip the beds and remake them might have rendered Alix Kates Shulman's marriage agreement entirely unnecessary; it might even have saved her marriage. But it wasn't perversity or thick-headedness or even economic hardship that precluded her from turning to this easy and efficient solution, which Diamant's marriage counselor found so obvious—for *heaven's sake!*—that he seems to have issued it in a fit of pique at his clients' obtuseness. Shulman's marital crisis occurred in the 1970s, a very bad time to be in need of domestic help. Black women, who had held a centuries-old unhappy lock on the work, were abandoning it in huge numbers, taking advantage of the civil-rights movement to get the kind of jobs that had historically been out of their reach. Tainted by the stigma of slave days, poorly paid and culturally resented, "living in" (the most hated of domestic-work arrangements) was becoming increasingly rare, even in much of the Deep South. Day work, its slightly less loathed companion, was becoming the sole employment option of fewer and fewer black women. The availability of domestic workers was reaching a dramatic low point at the very moment when the need for them (with millions of middle-class women voluntarily entering the work force) was approaching an all-time high. The two phenomena were on a crash course,

set to destroy much of what Betty Friedan and her compatriots had begun.

A second factor intensified the dilemma. Give those old libbers their due: they spent a lot of time thinking about the unpleasantness of housework and the unfairness of its age-old tendency to fall upon women. (They could hardly have imagined that in twenty years' time Martha Stewart would build an empire on the notion that ironing and polishing silver and sweeping a kitchen floor might offer an almost sacred communion with what is most essentially and attractively feminine.) They were loath, they claimed, to foist such demeaning work on other human beings (well, not all of them were loath: Betty Friedan had a crack cleaning woman on staff when she was busy writing about the oppression of domestic work). Indeed, Shulman's contract specifies that the "burden" of the cleaning work should not be placed on "someone hired from outside." Members of the women's movement believed that it was of great importance, politically and psychologically, for men to share equally in the care of households and children. Further, feminists of the period had also thought deeply about race, and about the tendency of white women to shape comfortable lives around the toil and suffering of black women. The members of a thousand consciousness-raising groups drove themselves into a thousand tizzies trying to think up a solution to this homely yet vexing problem. The notorious Wages for Housework campaign ("WE WANT IT IN CASH, RETROACTIVE AND IMMEDIATELY. AND WE WANT ALL OF IT") came to naught. Pat Mainardi's much read *The Politics of Housework* included many strategies for cajoling a reluctant male into taking on some washing and cooking, from the deeply Marxist ("Arm yourself with some knowledge of the psychology of oppressed peoples") to the stubbornly practical ("Use timesheets"), but you can know chapter and verse about the psychology of oppressed peoples and still not get a man to turn out a nice meal—the rice ready at the same time as the meat—come the end of a long day. Communes, which had offered the promise of a collective approach to domestic work, turned out to be yet another bust. As Vivian Estellachild wrote

in 1971, the typical hippie commune's recruitment ad could have read, "Wanted: groovy, well-built chick to share apartment and do the cooking and cleaning."

Certainly there was a bit of hope in the abandonment of bourgeois house-keeping standards, something that the most radical factions were demanding and that even the less political groups saw as promising. *The Feminine Mystique* has its roots in a questionnaire that Betty Friedan sent to her Smith College classmates on the occasion of their fifteenth reunion. Included on it were questions one might expect: "Did you have career ambitions?" "Who manages the family finances, you or your husband?" But there were also these two telling questions: "Do you put the milk bottle on the table? Use paper napkins?" Milk decanted into a pitcher, and a linen napkin beside the breakfast plate—the physical embodiment of an approach to daily life that included moments of grace and loveliness, that showed (to use the old phrase) a woman's touch—suddenly seemed the very stuff of oppression. But even with the fillips abandoned, with the milk plunked down on the table and the kids wiping at grotty faces with paper napkins, there was still a heck of a lot of housework and child care that simply couldn't be streamlined.

And so, because of these petty, almost laughably low concerns—the unmade beds, the children with their endless questions, the crumbs and jelly on the counter, the tendency of a good fight over housework to stop the talking and the kissing and the, well, you know—one of the most profound cultural revolutions in American history came perilously close to running aground. And then, like magic, as though the fairy god-mother of women's liberation had waved a starry wand, the whole problem got solved. You must take a deus ex machina where you find one, and in the case of the crumbs and jelly on the counter tops, the deus ex machina turned out to be the forces of global capitalism. With the arrival of a cheap, easily exploited army of poor and luckless women—fleeing famine, war, the worst kind of poverty, leaving behind their children to do it, facing the possibility of rape or death on the expensive and

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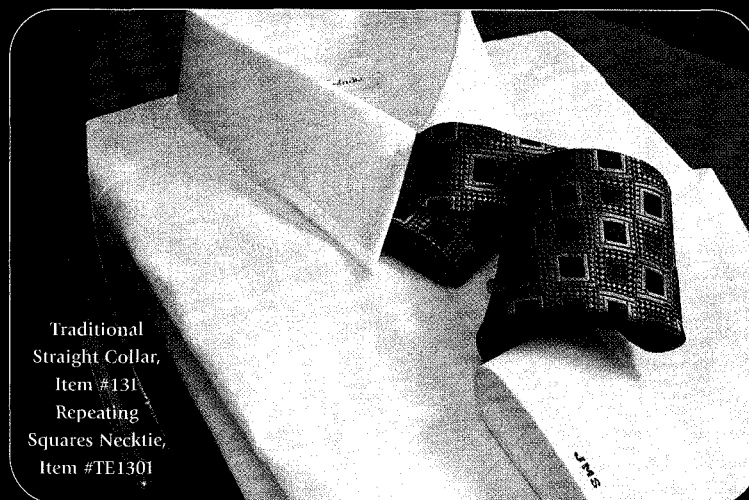
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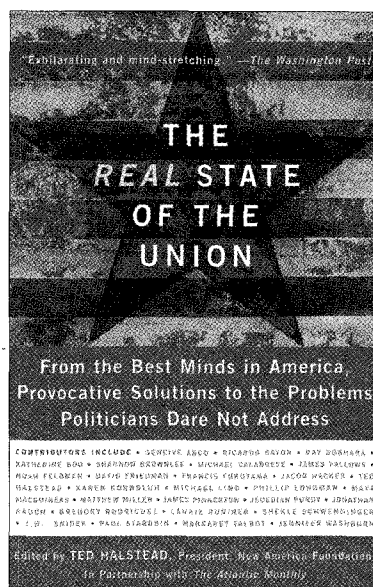
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secret journey—one of the noblest tenets of second-wave feminism collapsed like a house of cards. The new immigrants were met at the docks not by a highly organized and politically powerful group of American women intent on bettering the lot of their sex but, rather, by an equally large army of educated professional-class women with booming careers who needed their children looked after and their houses cleaned. Any supposed equivocations about the moral justness of white women's employing dark-skinned women to do their shit work simply evaporated.

The process by which the First World has been flooded with immigrant female domestic workers during the past two decades (in such overwhelming numbers that researchers are now remarking on the "feminization of mi-

Rhacel Salazar Parreñas's *Servants of Globalization* and Grace Chang's *Disposable Domesticity*. But how so many middle-class American women went from not wanting to oppress other women to viewing that oppression as a central part of their own liberation—that is a complicated and sorry story. In it you will find the seeds of things we don't like to discuss much, including the elitism and hypocrisy of the contemporary feminist movement, the tendency of working and nonworking mothers to pit themselves against one another, and the way that adult middle-class life has become so intensely, laughably child-centered that in the past month I have chaperoned my children to eight birthday parties, yet not attended a single cocktail party (do they even exist anymore?).

To begin, let us turn to the best book ever written on American working moth-

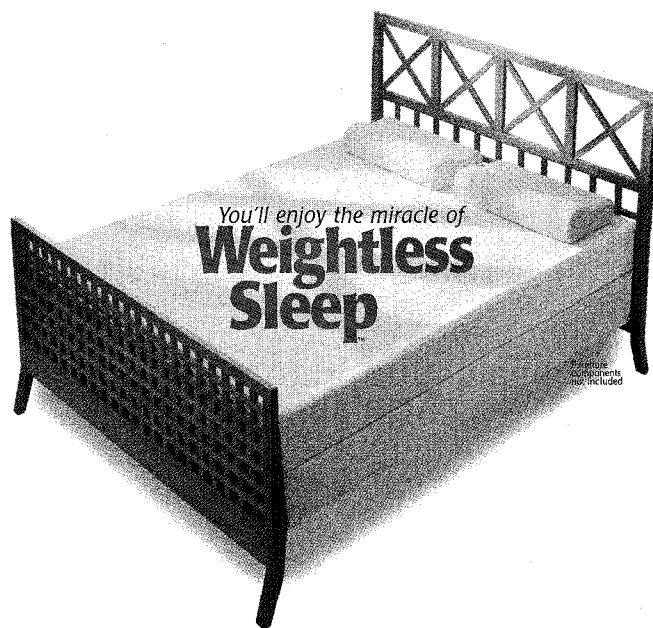
Ask an upper-middle-class woman why she is exploiting another woman for child care, and she will cry that she has to do it because there's no universal day care. But get a bunch of professional-class mothers together, and they will freely admit that day care sucks; get a nanny.

gration") is fairly well documented, considering that so much of it is done in secret. There are several established trade routes along which future nannies are transported, the most desperate of which takes women from Southeast Asia to Middle Eastern countries such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, destinations so notorious for the mistreatment of domestic workers that I am put in mind of Winston Churchill's old saying: "When you're going through hell, keep going." For Americans the two mother lodes of nannies are Central America and the Caribbean. There is an excellent précis of the entire phenomenon in the introduction, by Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, to the recent and very fine essay collection they edited, *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*.

How these workers became available to middle-class women is well known and amply reported, both in the press and in dozens of fine books, including

ers, a book that ought to be required reading in any women's-studies course: *The Equality Trap*, by Mary Ann Mason, who is a law and social-welfare professor at Berkeley. In it she reveals that there were in fact two distinct groups of mothers who entered the work force in the 1970s, for two distinct sets of reasons. There were middle-class women, fed up with housework and eager for the challenge, the respite, the intellectual engagement, of work. (Imagine my mother: it is 1976, and a casserole is defrosting on her kitchen counter, but she is far away from that counter; she is on a BART train, rocketing along to her new office at Equitable Life Insurance, pleased as punch.) It is these women, and now their daughters (imagine me, with an advanced degree and a book contract, sitting down at the computer, pleased as punch), who have driven a tremendous amount of the public debate and policy on the subject of working mothers.

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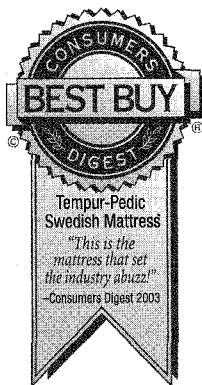
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But there was a second group of women, a quieter and more invisible group, who were not at all pleased as punch. Mason writes,

The dramatic shift from a manufacturing to a service economy, which occurred in the seventies, rendered the concept of a "family wage," earned by a relatively well-paid union member father, an anachronism. Their husbands' lower wages were driving mothers into the labor market in unprecedented numbers.

The number of women in each group continued to grow, but as Mason chillingly and accurately notes,

The great majority of American women workers were ... striving to make ends meet in women's occupations and were not entering high-paying male-dominated occupations such as law, medicine, and corporate management. But it was the relatively small class of women who were trying to push into the high-stakes male professions ... [that] drove the feminist movement ... [These women] were not greatly concerned with secretaries or poor single parents.

Moreover, "Clusters of women rally around hot button issues like abortion rights, domestic violence, and gay parenting while academic women fret on queer theory, but there is no longer a compelling activist vision." And the pure, ugly truth of the thing: "Ironically, perhaps the only impact the feminist drive for equal rights in the workplace has had on this poorest, fastest growing segment of women is as a cheerleader for women's participation in the workplace, no matter how mean her job or how difficult her family burden."

The feminist movement, from its earliest days, has always proceeded from the assumption that all women—rich and poor—constitute a single class, and that all members of the class are, by virtue simply of being female, oppressed. In many regards this was once entirely true: all women were denied the vote; employment law discriminated against all women; and all women lacked the right to legal abortion. But this paradigm has led to a new assumption: that all working mothers—rich and poor—constitute a single class, that they are all similarly oppressed, and that they are

united in a struggle against common difficulties. At its best this is vaguely well-intentioned but sloppy thinking. At its worst it is brutal and self-serving and shameful thinking.

The professional-class working mother—grateful inheritor of Betty Friedan's realizations about domestic imprisonment and the happiness and autonomy offered by work—is oppressed by guilt about her decision to keep working, by a society that often questions her commitment to and even her love for her children, by the labor-intensive type of parenting currently in vogue, by children's stalwart habit of falling deeply and unwaveringly in love with the person who provides their physical care, and by her uneasy knowledge that at-home mothers are giving their children much more time and personal attention than she is giving hers. She feels more than oppressed—she feels outraged! she wants something done about this!—by a corporate culture that refuses to let a working mother postpone an important meeting if it happens to coincide with the fourth-grade Spring Sing.

On the other hand, the nonprofessional-class working mother—unhappy inheritor of changes in the American economy that have thrust her unenthusiastically into the labor market—is oppressed by very different forces. She is oppressed by the fact that her work is oftentimes physically exhausting, ill-paid, and devoid of benefits such as health insurance and paid sick leave. She is oppressed by the fact that it is impossible to put a small child in licensed day care if you make minimum wage, and she is oppressed by the harrowing child-care options that are available on an unlicensed, inexpensive basis. She is oppressed by the fact that she has no safety net: if she falls out of work and her child needs a visit to the doctor and antibiotics, she may not be able to afford those things and will have to treat her sick child with over-the-counter medications, which themselves are far from cheap. She is oppressed by the fact that—another feminist gain—single motherhood has been so championed in our culture, along with the sexual liberation of women and the notion that a woman doesn't really need a man. In

this climate she is often left shouldering the immense burden of parenthood alone.

With these very different kinds of oppression in mind, let us turn to a New York Times Notable Book, written by a *New York Times* reporter: *A Mother's Place: Choosing Work and Family Without Guilt or Blame*, by Susan Chira. Chira was raised in an "affluent" suburb of New York, roared through Andover and Harvard, got a job at the Gray Lady, felt a "stab of anxiety" when, in her pre-children days, she happened to glance at a *New York* magazine headline that read something like "You Can't Have It All," yet nonetheless screwed her courage to the sticking place and had a baby. Almost immediately she became—oppressed. She was oppressed by the boredom and guilt that "cast a pall" over her maternity leave. She was oppressed by the working mothers she saw portrayed in the news media, who were "always teetering on the verge of collapse, haunted by the damage they were causing their children, dragging themselves heavyhearted to work." She was oppressed by "a growing conventional wisdom that labeled mothers like me neglectful, children like mine damaged, and a life like mine impossible and bad for society." She was oppressed by *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Striptease*, and the television sitcom *Home Improvement* (I would posit that she was also oppressed by her own taste in entertainment, but that's another matter altogether, I suppose). She was oppressed by "the cultural jeremiads against working motherhood," by the fact that she kept hearing that "children are this young only once" and "these years come and are gone forever."

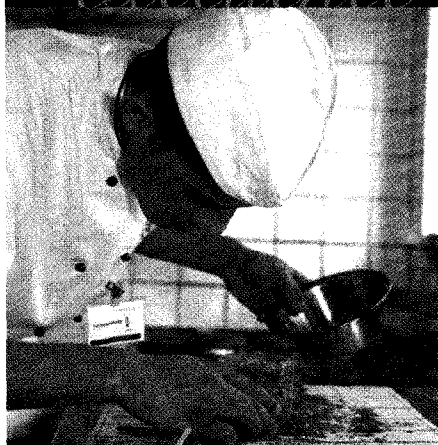
But Susan Chira shook off the shackles of her oppression! It turns out that the way to solve this thorny problem requires little more than a bit of attitude adjustment. It lies in "reframing the debate." Adopt Chira's credo: "Working motherhood is not second-class motherhood." Remember that "generations of black women had to work, and their children saw their work as evidence of devotion, not neglect." (Well, you know those black women: they have all the luck.) Champion whichever survey or

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opinion poll supports your choices; debunk the rest. Beware advocates of traditional motherhood, who seek to turn you into a "June Cleaver vampire." Be reasonable: "Is it really the end of the world if a mother is not at home when a child returns from school?" If all else fails, think big picture. Really big picture. "In hunter-gatherer societies," she reminds us, "mothers could combine family life with work."

Attitude properly adjusted, you are ready to adopt some of Chira's helpful, commonsense tips on guiltlessly combining work and motherhood, many of which involve shrewd deployment of the office telephone. "I began taking time at work to call the baby-sitter when I needed to touch base," she reports. She also personally "put through calls to the pediatrician." One of Chira's interviewees "had a rule at work that her children would always be put through to her, and she recounted how she would settle fights over the telephone about who got to practice the piano first." Chira asks this enticing question: "How about doing what one of my friends does: programming the phone so that her young son can push a button; get her office; tell her he's home; chat a little about his day; and then, reassured, play with his friends?" Indeed, some of Chira's happiest moments have arrived when she has dwelled closest to the golden nexus of phone and child: "Cradling my nursing baby in one arm and the phone in my ear, conducting an interview with some serious personage, I could hardly contain my happiness."

None of the above much bothers me. Mothers, myself included, have the right to work for pay; anyone old enough to hold a job has the right to work for pay. Whatever arrangements such mothers willingly make for their children, whatever strategies they employ to relieve their guilt, whatever books they read to assuage their anxiety—all of that is their business, not mine. What sends me around the bend is what the author has to say about poor mothers. Make no mistake about it: books in support of working mothers are written by women with progressive politics, and you'd better believe that these women are friends to the downtrodden. Chira

fully understands that she writes "as an upper-middle-class professional woman," which is why the interviews for her book were so wide-ranging, involving mothers "employed or at home; married, single, and divorced; well off, working class, and on welfare; white, African American, Latina and Chinese."

As we read about these interviewees, we get the distinct impression that Chira is indeed serving more as what Mason called a cheerleader for their participation in the work force than as someone revealing the hardships of their unlucky lot in life. We meet three different factory workers, whose collective story is a little bit of modern American Dickens: one first punched in at the plant at age eighteen and in rapid succession got married, gave birth, and was widowed; another works a second job in hopes of someday being able to leave

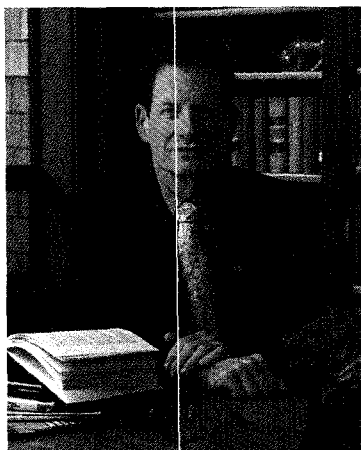
could have been home during the girl's adolescence). But perhaps these wishes were better left ungranted: "In extensive reviews of research on mothers' employment, [various researchers] all reported that most studies found higher levels of satisfaction among employed mothers than among mothers who stayed at home."

Before reading *A Mother's Place*, I had thought that universal day care might be a hideously expensive but necessary addition to the social-welfare program. But to hear Chira tell it, maybe we don't even need it. Of one of the factory workers we learn that "even on a budget, paying comparatively little for child care, Toni was able to find warm, reliable sitters for her children and has used only two baby-sitters in all her years of working." Ahling Deng, a New York garment worker living in a China-

The precise intersection of many women's most passionate impulses—their profound, almost physical love for their children and their fervent wish to make something of themselves beyond their own doorstep—is the exact spot where nannies show up for work each day.

the factory, but so far no luck; the third, an employee at a Welch's jelly factory, was once so hard up that she could afford to feed her children only eggs and Welch's jelly. I'll bet all three women would be stunned to read, in Chira's section on "Working and Thriving," that "waitresses, factory workers, and domestic workers told the researchers in a 1987 study that they would not leave the workforce even if they did not need the money." As it happens, the survey, which I tracked down, says nothing of the sort. How could it? That's a preposterous claim. But, it turns out, there's more good news for the factory workers, particularly for the ones who are moonlighting: several other studies have found that "taking on more than one role can act as a buffer against depression." All three of the factory workers said they'd wanted to stay home with their children when they were small (and one of them, whose teenage daughter became pregnant, fervently wishes she

town tenement, has also had no problem: "Her middle daughter and her son attended a local day care center from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. She paid only \$5 a week, a sum based on her income, which is now about \$140 a week." Again, I tend to get bogged down in the extraneous details: how in the world is this woman supporting small children on \$140 a week? But for Ahling, it turns out, "the challenge is far more how to keep her children Chinese amid a sea of American self-indulgence than how to work and mother at the same time." I'll bet that \$140 a week sure helps to keep the American self-indulgence at bay. Then there's a single mother who works all day as an administrative assistant at a hospital and attends night school—but she doesn't need universal day care either: "Her long days are possible because Elesha can draw on her close extended family, who share in her daughter's care." As Elesha told Chira, "She's not really away from me that much, and



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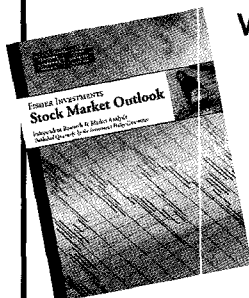
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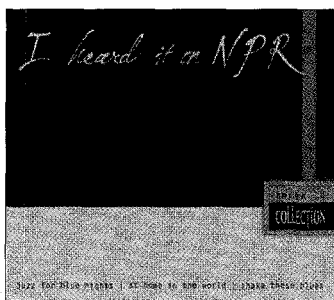
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when she is, she's still with my family. She just thrives there." And then there's this to consider: another of the factory workers managed to stay home with one of her three children, but "the one who was the weakest in school was the child she had reared at home."

Why would Chira write such things? Because her book isn't really for or about the working-class mother. Look at the subtitle: "Choosing Work and Family Without Guilt or Blame." It's for women like herself, who have chosen to separate themselves from their children for long hours of the day, and who feel a clawing, ceaseless anxiety about this. Conflating the hardships of the working-poor mother with the insecurities of the professional-class mother ennobles the richer woman's struggles (entirely self-inflicted). Describing how even poor mothers are "working and thriving," and extolling the benefits of passing a child around among family members while her mother is gone for hour after hour, makes the richer woman's choices look not like what they are—a series of decisions often based entirely on providing herself with maximum happiness—but, rather, like the empirically proven superior way to raise children. Once read in this new light, the book—couched in the know-it-all, smarty-pants tone one expects from the one-two punch of Andover and Harvard, with a little *New York Times* pomposity thrown in for good measure—becomes as silly as a Bazooka Joe comic. All that blather about having your child's telephone calls "put through"—to the factory floor? to the sweatshop? ("Sorry to interrupt, Ms. Deng, but I've got Johnny on line two.")

Understand this conflation of the anxieties of the wealthy with the struggles of the poor and you will understand a number of phenomena in our culture. In fact, with this understanding firmly in mind, we are ready to consider the Big Kahuna of this kind of thinking, the *Das Kapital* of our working-mother age, a book generally approached with the kind of unquestioning reverence with which the fundamentalist Christian approaches the Book of Revelation. We are ready now

to consider *The Price of Motherhood*, by Ann Crittenden.

The Price of Motherhood proceeds from an undeniable and painful truth: that although keeping a house and raising children are as physically exhausting and emotionally demanding as almost any job you can think of, they are entirely unpaid endeavors—a fact that carries grave economic repercussions for women far beyond the loss of a weekly paycheck. This was made starkly evident to Crittenden—as it is made starkly evident to millions of women every year—when she took a look at her Social Security statement and noticed a startling row of zeros, the first of which corresponded exactly to the date she began her life's most challenging work: raising her son. If a traditional marriage ends in divorce, the children's father walks off with a full complement of Social Security credits and a career uninterrupted by a years-long furlough; the mother is left with those zeros. Crittenden rightly notes that "the spouse who principally cares for the children—and the children—are almost invariably worse off financially after divorce than the spouse who devotes all his energies to a career." Indeed, becoming a mother is the single best way a woman can elevate her risk of living in poverty—a truth that ought to be the unwavering call for action of the feminist movement. Crittenden has named the economic liability that mothers face the "Mommy Tax," which seems fair enough. But she goes on to inform us that this tax is "highest for well-educated, high-income individuals and lowest for poorly educated people who have less potential income to lose." Wait a minute—as a good liberal, shouldn't I be happy about that last fact? Don't I want tax burdens to fall with disproportionate weight on the wealthiest? Well, not if the wealthiest are working mothers. All working mothers, let us remember, are oppressed, and the oppression of the wealthiest is somehow more important, more urgent, more remarkable, than the oppression of the poorest. Crittenden reminds us that it is women "who adjust their lives to accommodate the needs of children; who do what is necessary to make a home; who

forgo status, income, advancement, and independence." And, she informs us, "Nowhere is this more dramatically illustrated than in the experience of the nation's most educated women—the ones who had the best shot at having it all."

If you are the sort of person whose deepest sympathies lie with the nation's most educated women, you had best not crack open *The Price of Motherhood*, for it will break your heart. In it you will learn of female lawyers who "flock into the big firms" where they "work morning, noon, and night"—my God, it's worse than being a migrant farm laborer!—"and then depart, leaving the fat pickings of partnership to the men." You will learn about women married to men who earn "serious six- and seven-figure incomes," men who "usually work horrendous hours"; these are salaries and hours that "operate as effectively as a mullah's edict in pushing a wife back into the home." You will learn of women who are so ignorant of their financial holdings that although they live "in million-dollar-plus houses," they "couldn't get their hands on \$5,000." Says a Radcliffe College fundraiser, "Getting even \$10,000 out of a woman is like pulling teeth." We learn of Crittenden's own plight on leaving *The New York Times* to raise her child: "very conservatively, I lost between \$600,000 and \$700,000, not counting the loss of a pension."

In Crittenden's defense, her concern for the most privileged members of society makes a certain sense: you could argue that a kind of trickle-down economics might come into play. "Not only are the largest [law] firms the most lucrative," she accurately notes in her section on how hostile such firms are to mothers, "they are the traditional breeding grounds for high government officials, judges, and other positions of authority." Perhaps if enough women held power and authority and economic clout they would work to improve the economic lot of women without power and clout; perhaps a high tide of female power would raise all boats. Unfortunately, this has proved not to be true. The most educated and powerful women are the ones most likely to employ nannies,

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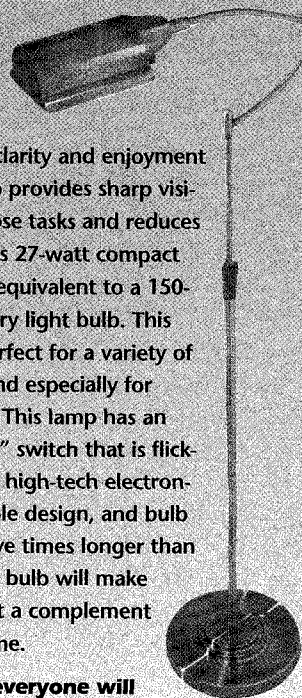
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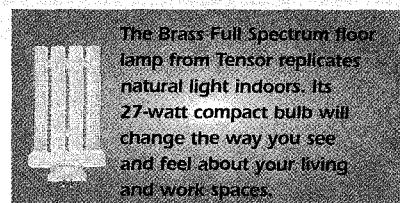
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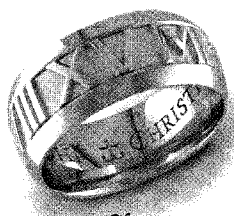
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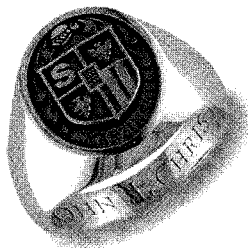
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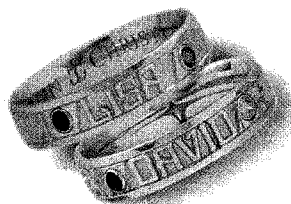
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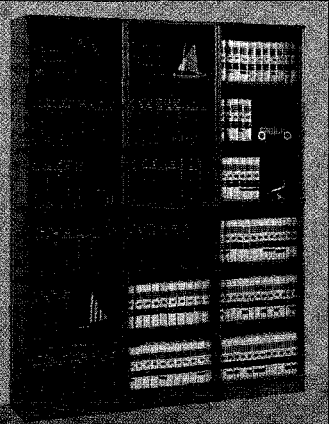
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and when they do so, it is very often on the most undesirable terms.

We have come, of course, to the case of Zoe Baird, who had done her time at a lucrative big firm, who didn't blink when motherhood came along but kept on charging blindly forward, and who found herself in due time a candidate for one of the high government appointments—Attorney General—for which such firms groom lawyers. But it all went bust, as you will recall, in Nannygate. Crittenden's chapter on nannies, of which the Zoe Baird case is the centerpiece, is buried near the back of the book, as if even its author is aware of how illogical it is—aware that nearly every sentence undermines the book's most central arguments, that the entire topic of nannies is the Achilles' heel of the feminist campaign to help professional-class mothers earn the right to (as they would say) mother and work without guilt.

Baird's nomination hearings came to an abrupt halt when it was revealed that she employed two Peruvian illegal immigrants as domestic workers, one of them as her child's nanny, and had failed to pay the required Social Security taxes on their wages. (The two, by the way, earned around \$6.00 an hour, whereas their employers' household income was well in excess of half a million dollars a year.) This, Crittenden tells us, was merely "a civil violation"—one that might be viewed on a par with getting a parking ticket. "That was Zoe Baird's crime," Crittenden informs us in quiet, seething understatement: just that silly little civil violation about the taxes, or whatever. And then the world came crashing down on poor Zoe because her case really became a referendum on working mothers. "Just when we are on the verge of moving into real power," a friend of Crittenden's lamented, "they invented a new reason to keep us out." Those damn nanny taxes! What next?

But wait a minute, Ann. Haven't you just spent an entire book telling us how important Social Security set-asides are? Didn't you characterize Social Security as "the keystone of the American welfare state"? Didn't you remind us that "a person can only qualify for Social Security as an employed

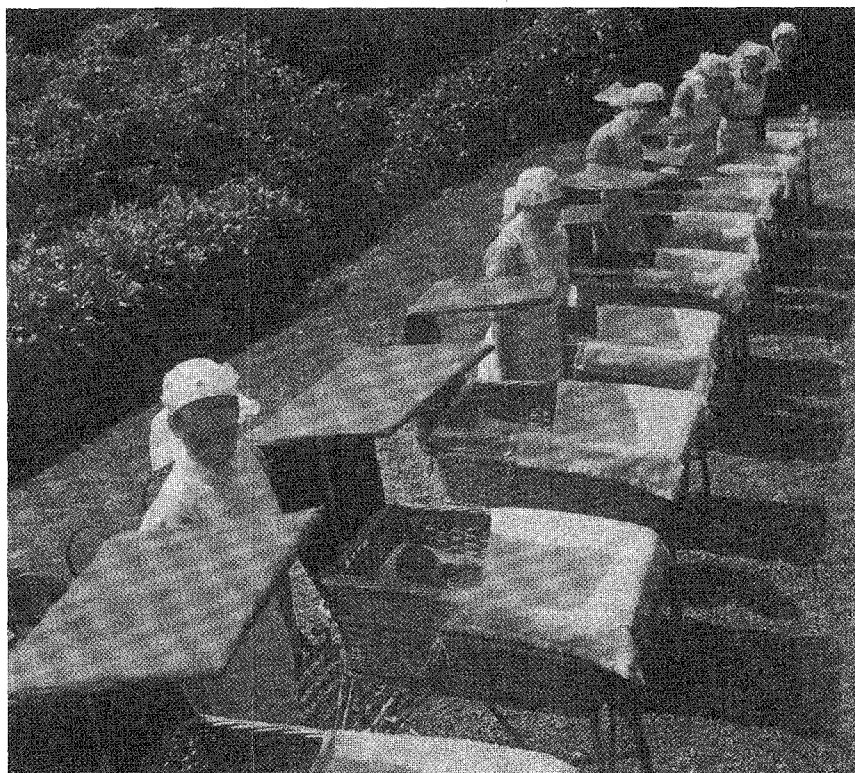
worker or as the ‘dependent’ spouse or widow of an employed worker”? (We’re hip to those quotation marks around “dependent,” by the way—the word is so damn insulting to women. Right on, sister. But it’s a word with a particular resonance in the case of the Bairds’ two domestic workers, seeing as they were married to each other, and neither one of them was getting Social Security contributions.)

For someone in Ann Crittenden’s position, seeing a string of zeros on her Social Security statement can be a “dramatic reminder” that society does not value and honor her hard choices—leaving *The New York Times*! exposing herself to snubs at cocktail parties!—as highly as it should. It “sends some strange social messages” about what’s most important in our culture. But besides making her feel undervalued and perhaps shorting her a few dollars in retirement if she gets divorced, the zeros probably won’t have much effect on her life. They certainly won’t plunge her into poverty the way they often do to former nannies. For many Americans, Social Security constitutes a crucial element of financial survival: it’s how they support themselves during retirement.

Of course, Baird was hardly alone in committing this particular civil violation. Failure to pay the required taxes does not necessarily speak of any ill will on the part of employers; often it is at the request of the nanny herself. Just as often it is an expression of the deep ambivalence many Americans feel about hiring servants. In 2001 a University of Southern California professor named Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo published a book that I thought would be the talk of Los Angeles, but that—after quietly winning a clutch of awards in its field—sank without a trace. *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence* concerns the lives and working conditions of Central American nannies and housecleaners in Los Angeles. Masterly, evenhanded, and rooted in the high-minded ambitions of its author (the daughter of a former domestic worker, she donated all royalties from the sale of the book to the Domestic Workers’

Association, a division of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles), *Doméstica* raises questions that are hard to face if you have immigrants working in your home. The author notes in the preface,

In the United States today, these jobs remain effectively unregulated by formal rules and contracts. Consequently, even today they often resemble relations of servitude that prevailed in earlier, precapitalist feudal societies. These contemporary work arrangements contradict American democratic ideals and modern contractual notions of employment.



She says of nannies and housecleaners,

Unlike the working poor who toil in factories and fields, domestic workers see, touch, and breathe the material and emotional world of their employers’ homes. They scrub grout, coax reluctant children to nap and eat their vegetables, launder and fold clothes, mop, dust, vacuum, and witness intimate and otherwise private family dynamics. Inside the palatial mansion, the sprawling ranch-style home, or the modest duplex, they do these activities over and over again.

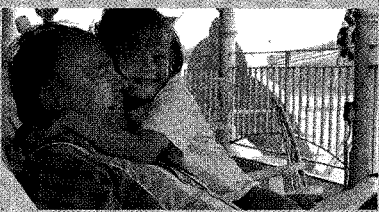
The analogies between this kind of employment and another, far darker kind of service are sometimes uncomfortably apt: Hondagneu-Sotelo reports

that Dolores Castro, the owner of an employment agency, says of domestic workers’ sketchy and often wildly inaccurate knowledge of their rights, “In the world that they travel, there’s a lot of misinformation because it’s all coming from, it’s almost like wives’ tales ... like the way that slaves sort of communicated in the old South.” Hondagneu-Sotelo writes, “Castro’s comparison of contemporary domestic workers to slaves of the old South is telling. Her job is not that of the slave trade, but she earns a living by making these low-wage job placements.”

Many professional-class women, who had previously encountered mistress-servant relationships only in literature, are stunned to find themselves suddenly plunged into just such a relationship, a consequence of hiring a nanny that they had never even considered. Hondagneu-Sotelo points out that although these women don’t like to think of themselves as members of the landed gentry, paternalistically doling out favors to humble dogsbodies, neither are they eager to think of themselves as “employers” in the contemporary American sense of the word, or of their homes as workplaces. They prefer to think of themselves as consumers of a service—

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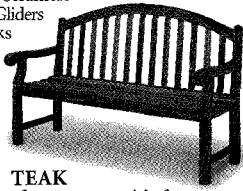
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and consumers, of course, have no obligation or responsibility to what they consume. In such a perspective, the relationship may seem cleaner, less encumbered: a sterile transaction of cash for services. But the law is very clear on this, and it was written to protect domestic workers: unless they make less than \$1,400 a year, they are deserving of the same wage and hour regulations, the same disability insurance, and the same Social Security set-asides to which all other employees in this country—from the law-firm partner to the lowly Wal-Mart clerk, and everyone in between—are entitled.

To the contemporary feminist, Zoe Baird was a victim principally of the national antagonism toward working mothers, and specifically of a problem common to all such women: there simply isn't enough affordable, high-quality child care in this country. (To the extent that the feminist thinks at all about the Peruvian couple in Baird's employ, it is usually to characterize them as sub-victims of the same problem.) It is a problem, feminists argue, that the government ought to address posthaste. In a new book called *The Mommy Myth*, Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels report that "for most mothers, work is an absolute necessity, and so, hello, Earth to Congress, some reliable form of childcare is also an absolute necessity." Because most of their readers don't have time to review everything that "those half-wits in the District" have to say on the subject of universal day care, the authors provide a fairly accurate overview of how the program has died a thousand deaths in Congress. They conclude, "A clear villain emerges—the far right wing in the United States." They're mostly right about that, and they're definitely right that millions of working-poor families are desperately in need of child care.

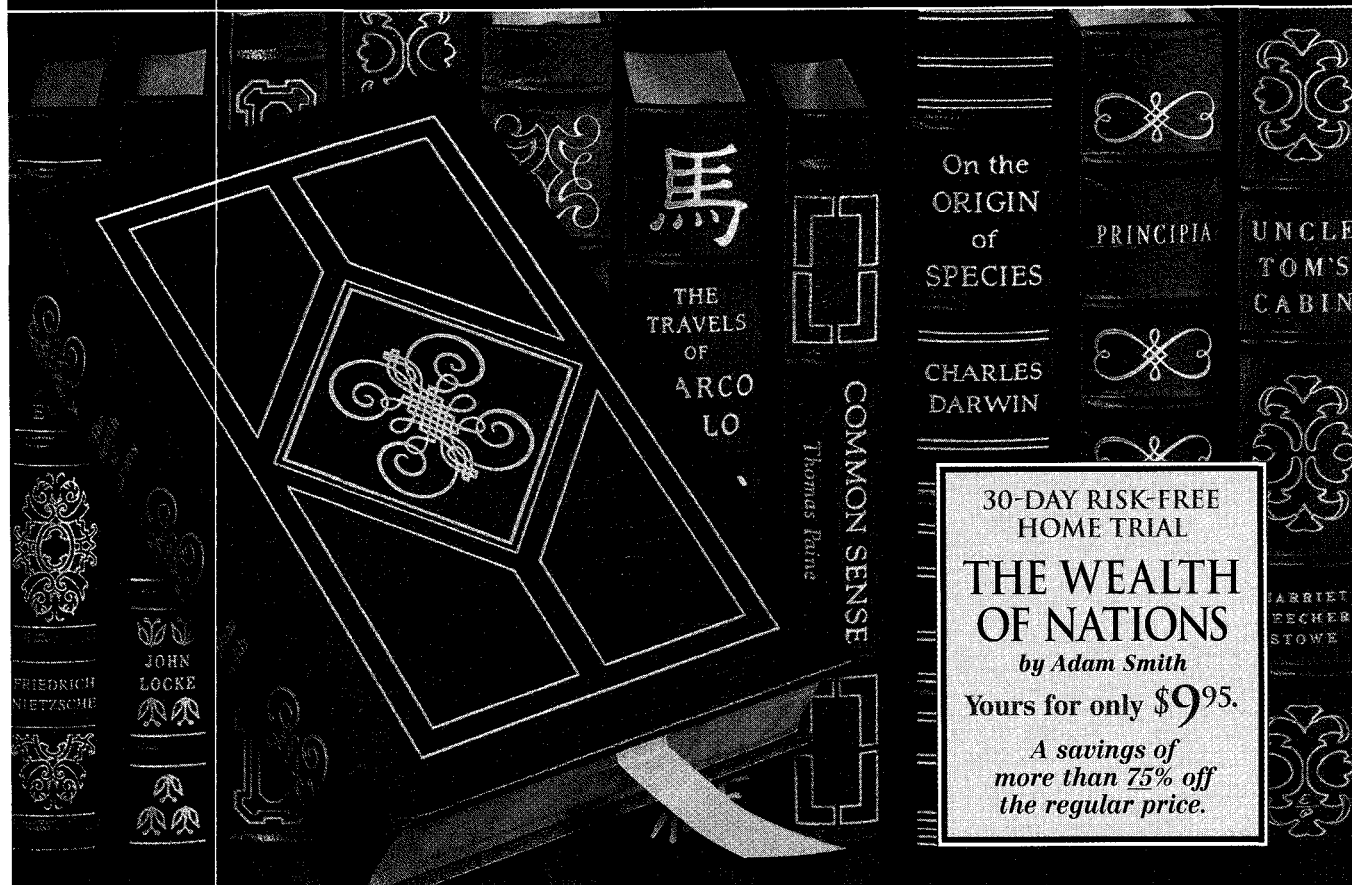
But guess what? We're told a single mother with a waitressing job is in exactly the same boat as a wealthy woman with a partnership in a major law firm and a similarly well employed husband. Joan K. Peters is the author of a highly regarded book called *When Mothers Work: Loving Our Children Without Sac-*

rificing Our Selves. It proceeds from an assumption dear to many women's hearts: "I argue that mothers should work outside the home," she tells us at the outset. "If they do not, they cannot preserve their identities or raise children to have both independent and family lives." (Good news for sweatshop workers and their children everywhere—Mom's identity as an underpaid seamstress is vital to healthy family functioning.) To Peters, as to so many of her philosophical sisters, all working mothers are united in a common struggle.

Whether they are applying for the post of attorney general like Zoe Baird, or moving from welfare to work, child care is a visible issue in their lives. As more employed women balk at trading their jobs for full-time motherhood, subsidized quality child care will become one of their primary political demands.

No, it won't. The chances that someone like Zoe Baird—a woman who, at the time of her predicament, was working a huge number of hours at a highly remunerative job—would make use of subsidized child care are close to zilch. *Getting It Right*, by Laraine T. Zappert, is based on a "landmark study" of "more than three hundred women who have graduated from Stanford's Graduate School of Business," and who are "successfully taking up the challenge of life, family and career." The book is organized like a B-school PowerPoint presentation, with chapters divided into heavily bullet-pointed sections such as "Experience," "Lessons Learned," and "Action Plan." The chapter on child care unequivocally advises readers to eschew day care in favor of employing nannies, because they are clearly the best option for professional women; in the first place, such employees "obviate the need for time-consuming pickups and deliveries." (Even the nomenclature suggests why a woman anxious about her choices in life wouldn't like day care: a good mother doesn't want to admit to having to make "deliveries" and "pickups" of her children, as though they were so many dirty shirts being sent to the laundry.) As one professional woman said, "Good help and lots of it is key to making the whole thing possible." Any moral equiv-

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ocations about the larger ramifications of hiring a woman for such a job can be dispensed with quickly. Zappert points out, "The premiums offered to find and retain an excellent child-care provider are often more beneficent than any of the workplace perks that most professional women themselves enjoy." (Good thing Zoe's Peruvians didn't hear about those perks; they might have demanded access to an on-site gym and an annual executive physical.) True, such arrangements "can have a downside for the care provider." But there is always a silver lining where working mothers are involved: "Princeton sociologist Marta Tienda points out that 'because we rely on other women to take care of our children, two women can enter the labor force for every one that takes on a new job ... all of [whom] are driving economic growth in a profound way.'" Granted, one of these two women has taken a job in which she may be paid under the table and denied Social Security set-asides, and is very probably (more good news for our booming, child-care-based economy) leaving her own children with yet a third woman in an arrangement in which cash changes hands and Social Security is never mentioned. But the professional-class working mother need not dwell on such unpleasantness: "Political economics aside," Zappert says, "it is clear from our survey that if you can do it, and particularly if you are working full time and/or have more than one child, having in-home child care can greatly decrease the stress of balancing work and life priorities."

So here we have the crux of the problem: ask an upper-middle-class woman why she is exploiting another woman for child care, and she will cry that she has to do it because there's no universal day care. But get a bunch of professional-class mothers together, and they will freely admit that day care sucks; get a nanny. This was a truth that Naomi Wolf—feminist, Yale, Rhodes scholar, big thinker—learned the hard way after giving birth to her first child. In *Misconceptions*, Wolf reports,

I never thought I would become one of those women who took up a fore-ordained place in a hierarchy of class and gender. Yet here we were, to my

horror and complicity, shaping our new family structure along class and gender lines—daddy at work, mommy and caregiver from two different economic classes, sharing the baby work during the day.

Her dreams of parenthood, apparently formed while tripping across green New Haven quadrangles on her way to feminist-theory classes, were starkly different: "I had wanted us to be a mother and a father raising children side by side, the man moving into the world of children, the woman into the world of work, in equitable balance, maybe each working flexibly from home, the two making the same world and sharing the same experiences and values." She had wanted a revolution; what she got was a Venezuelan.

I am about the same age as Naomi Wolf, and we had children at about the same time, but I had neither expected nor wanted a revolution. I did not have a single dream about moving into the world of work when I was a girl. In fact, when I concluded that being a girl was in every way superior to being a boy, my two top pieces of evidence—freely offered, never challenged—consisted of the facts that I would never have to go either to Vietnam or to a job. (I confess to a brief, Howard Carter-inspired period during which I planned to become an Egyptologist, but that dream centered chiefly on a pale-blue linen sheath that I intended to wear in the desert. I was also deeply affected by the Modesty Blaise novels, but I realized that all the images they inspired—principally of having an erotically charged but entirely chaste relationship with a worshipful man while we cheated death and fought crime on an international basis—were, although startlingly intense, the stuff of fantasy.) What I dreamed about was getting married and having babies and running a household. I did, as a young woman, teach school, but I always thought of it as an engaging time killer until the babies arrived. And arrive they did, trailing the advertised clouds of glory, but also (this had not entered into any of my dreams) trailing an awful lot of shit work—shit work that grew more onerous and complicated with each passing month. Furthermore, the shit

work seemed to be devolving almost entirely to me, for like Naomi, I had taken up a preordained place in the hierarchy of class and gender.

Don't get me wrong: I got a real kick out of the babies. But the cleaning was putting me in a funk—a bad kind of funk. A feminist-type, really cheesed-off kind of funk. I had expected, merely upon the simple fact of giving birth, to be magically transformed from the kind of woman who likes to spend most of the morning lying on the couch reading and drinking coffee and talking on the telephone to the kind of woman who likes to spend most of the morning tidying up and thinking about what to cook for dinner and inviting other mothers over for a nice chat. It didn't happen. Play dates—a sort of minimum-security lockdown spent in the company of other mildly depressed women

job or cracking the unsealed Italian marble you special-ordered from a catalogue, good luck to you. But if you want someone to take charge of your children, you can take your pick, and they can all start tomorrow. As Vicki Iovine, the author of the *Girlfriends' Guide* series (a collection of books about motherhood that I read so obsessively as a new parent that if every extant copy were destroyed, I could re-create her entire oeuvre in a week), reports, "Most of us find our nannies and sitters through the *Girlfriends' Grapevine*. We mention to a *Girlfriend's* nanny that we need help, and she sends one of her friends to us." It has ever been thus. The most engaging work of social history I have ever read is Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy's *The Rise and Fall of the British Nanny*. Describing the hiring process in Victorian England, he reports that so many women

Interesting facts, all of them, but the most striking comment comes from little old spoiled Clara. "You raised me," she said to her former nanny, "I want you to raise my daughters." If there is a signal difference between these nanny times and previous ones, it has to do with the intense anxiety working mothers feel about who, exactly, is "raising" their children. I know many women whose children are cared for almost around the clock by nannies, but those women would never be as honest about the fact as Clara. For that reason, and for a hundred others, the subject of nannies is a minefield. For many professional-class women like me, the relationship they have with their children's nanny is a source of the deepest and most painful kind of self-examination. The relationship is in many ways more intense—more vexing, more rewarding, more vital, more fraught—than a marriage. The precise intersection of many women's most passionate impulses—their profound, almost physical love for their children and their ardent wish to make something of themselves beyond their own doorstep—is the exact spot where nannies show up for work each day. There isn't a nanny in the world who has not received a measure of love that a child would rather have bestowed on his mother. The women's magazines—which have shrewdly staked out as their turf the inexhaustible guilt and anxiety of the working mother—will have none of this. Article after article insists that no one can ever replace a mother, and that a child's love for his mother is unequalled by his feelings for anyone else. Rubbish. To con oneself into thinking that the person who provides daily physical care to a child is not the one he is going to love in a singular and primal way—a way obviously designed by nature herself to cleave child to mother and vice versa—is to ignore one of the most fundamental truths of childhood. Just as women, often despite their fervent desires to the contrary, tend to fall in love with the men they sleep with, so do small children develop an immediate and consuming passion for the person who feeds and rocks and bathes them every day. It's in the nature of the way they experience love. I have often thought that the American preoccupa-

If you want to make an upper-middle-class woman squeal in indignation, tell her she can't have something. She can't have as deep and connected a relationship with her child if she works as she would if she stayed home and raised him.

and their tiresome, demanding babies—brought on a small death of the spirit, the effects of which I feared might be cumulative. I also felt resentful and sometimes even furious about almost any domestic task that presented itself: why was I supposed to endlessly wipe down the kitchen counters and lug bags of garbage out to the cans and set out the little plastic plates of steamed carrots and mashed bananas that the children touched only in order to hurl them onto the floor? Hadn't every essay I'd ever submitted in college come back with a little mash note telling me I was in some way special, a cut above, meant for something? Wasn't I designed for more important things than putting away Lego blocks and loading the dishwasher? I was! It was time. *Cherchez la femme*.

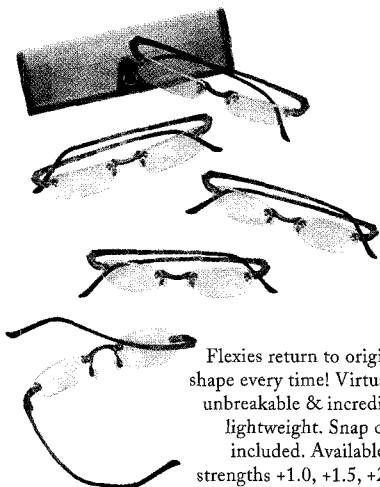
How did I find her? It was easy. The city is full of them. If you want to find a contractor who will remodel your kitchen sometime before the next presidential election without disappearing for weeks on end midway through the

were eager for such work that finding a nanny was simple: "When everyone you knew had one, or generally more than one, you obtained your Nanny from a friend or relation who no longer had need of her." In the American segregated South nannies (called "mammies" or, more commonly, "maids") were passed among the members of an extended family with a casualness surely born of slaveholding traditions. Susan Tucker's *Telling Memories Among Southern Women* (another excellent and highly readable book) includes an elderly black woman's account of her experience working as a domestic for a white family in Depression-era Mobile: "They had two children, and one, that little old spoiled Clara, she was a teenager then. I still see her. She used to always get me about working for her, says, 'You raised me, and I want you to raise my daughters.'" During the Great Migration it was common for black women to find domestic work with members of an employer's family who had moved north.

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tion with rooting out cruel and unfeeling nannies—buying video cameras sewn into teddy bears, doubling back to the house to peer into windows, and so on—is really a somewhat hysterical reaction to the possibility of the opposite: nannies who share pure and wholly reciprocated love with their charges. This is dangerous territory for all concerned. Is it any wonder that so many nanny jobs end in blowups and abrupt sackings? On the other hand, if you are called out of town for a day or two (as I was for both of my parents' deaths, and—only once, but how thrilling! how important I felt!—for work), is there any more blessed, calming sensation than knowing that your child will be in the hands of someone who knows him and loves him almost as much as you do?

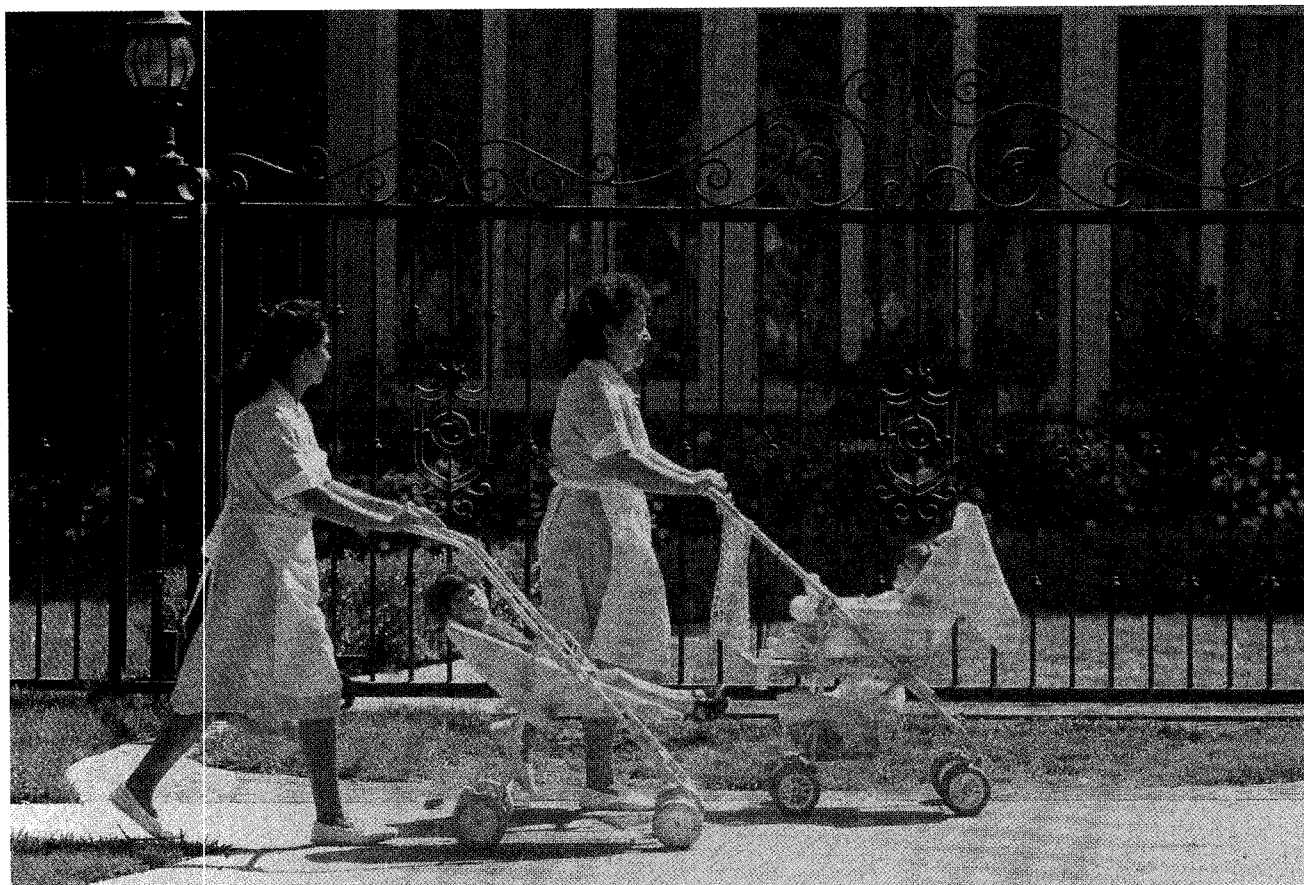
What few will admit—because it is painful, because it reveals the unpleasant truth that life presents a series of choices, each of which precludes a host of other attractive possibilities—is that when a mother works, something is lost. Children crave their mothers. They always have and they always will. And women fortunate enough to live in a society where they have access to that greatest of levelers, education, will always have the burning dream of doing something more exciting and important than tidying Lego blocks and running loads of laundry. If you want to make an upper-middle-class woman squeal in indignation, tell her she can't have something. If she works she can't have as deep and connected a relationship with her child as she would if she stayed home and raised him. She can't have the glamour and respect conferred on career women if she chooses instead to spend her days at "Mommy and Me" classes. She can't have both things. I have read numerous accounts of the anguish women have felt leaving small babies with caregivers so that they could go to work, and I don't discount those stories for a moment. That the separation of a woman from her child produces agony for both is one of the most enduring and impressive features of the human experience, and it probably accounts for why we've made it as far as we have. I've read just as many accounts of the despair

that descends on some women when their world is abruptly narrowed to the tedium and exhaustion of the nursery; neither do I discount these stories: I've felt that self-same despair.

In my case, the despair was lessened—greatly—by a nanny. Without her I could never have launched a second career as a writer. Her kindness, her patience, and her many (and oftentimes extreme) acts of generosity have shaped my family as much as any other force. But the implications of this solution to my domestic problems are grave, and ever since I read *Doméstica*, two years ago, I have been turning over in my mind the high moral cost of my decision. Even if one pays a fair wage, hires a legal resident of the United States, and pays both one's own share of the required taxes and the employee's, so as not to short her take-home pay (all of which I do), one is still part of a system that exposes women to the brutalities of illegal immigration, only to reward their suffering with the jobs that ease our already comfortable lives.

It's easy enough to dismiss the dilemma of the professional-class working mother as the whining of the elite. But people are entitled to their lives, and within the context of privilege there are certainly hard choices, disappointments, sorrows. Upper-middle-class working mothers may never have calm hearts regarding their choices about work and motherhood, but there are certain things they can all do. They can acknowledge that many of the gains of professional-class working women have been leveraged on the backs of poor women. They can legitimize those women's work and compensate it fairly, which means—at the very least—paying Social Security taxes on it. They can demand that feminists abandon their current fixation on "work-life balance" and on "ending the mommy wars" and instead devote themselves entirely to the real and heartrending struggle of poor women and children in this country. And they can stop using the hardships of the poor as justification for their own choices. About this much, at least, there ought to be agreement. ▀

Caitlin Flanagan is a contributing editor of The Atlantic. She is writing a book about modern motherhood.



FICTION

DEPENDENTS

Making beds for my employers, I know too much of them. Their bed here, it is like the bed of a seven-year-old: dry, neat, white, what Bing calls pretty princess perfect perfect

BY MONA SIMPSON

.....

A person needs somewhere that is only hers, even for one night a week. My first bed in America was a low bunk in Ruth's babysitter boardinghouse. Most of the other women had been here awhile, they already worked live in, so they used the beds in shifts. But each one got her own dresser, a hand-me-down from some employer. Every home has a place that is center. In my house, back in the Philippines, it is the cabinet where I display our important remembrance, the diplomas of our children and now my gifts from the ones I take care here. In the apartment of Ruth, the center is a book. Large, black, in the corner of the living room on a stand, it is left open like a Bible, or the Oxford Dictionary in the office of my employer. The book tells the story of our careers in America.

Ruth's teacher had been a picture bride and then worked domestic.

On the first page she typed, **How to Work for the White.**

They do not like their own smell. Their waste. Their own used things.

Americans, they are very dirty. They used to be clean. The grandparents are clean. And the habits they lost are what they now crave from us.

Women pasted in copies of letters to Marcos and the unfamous presidents of Latin America. One housekeeper included a poem to her future granddaughter, all in Spanish. Ruth's teacher trained Filipinas. "Because we know English," Ruth said, "and Japanese weren't working anymore domestic." Since then Ruth has been teaching all of us.

Everyone who stayed at Ruth's when they were starting signed their name

and where they were from. It is also a how-to book. There are recipes, you can see how to set a table, with as many as four forks and four spoons, things to know about pie crust, how to fan a napkin so it stands.

Always Do Extra, someone named Dora wrote in 1966. *Anything a little nice without spending their money. Here where I am they have orange trees. So I make an orange and lime salad.* She drew a picture of the way Valencias hold this year's new oranges and last year's and the white blossoms at the same time. *Always pick the old*, she advised. *They're sweeter.*

If someone made a dessert—floating island or a layer cake—and served it a special way, she put it in the book and who the guests were, even who said what about it. Several recorded the dates of compliments.

I find I need one praise every day, Analise Dayrit wrote in 1989. I worked for Professor Williamson, of UCLA, for twenty-nine years. When my husband die, she pay the funeral.

The book includes tips.

Two baths a day, teeth cleaning at four-hour intervals, and no curry, onion or garlic, even on days off. That is on a page from a book someone cut out and taped in: "If the Dog Likes You, You're Hired."

Don't let yourself become the queen. You're not the queen. The mother is the queen. Especially, it will happen sometimes before they are in school. Because they become so dependent. The mother, any fun she can have with her friends, any minute to go shopping, any for herself—she needs you, so at that time they will do everything to keep you happy. But the babysitter made her price so high that later on they decided they don't want. And instead of just changing the pay, they fire her.

I know because this was me.

The babysitter who was La Reina.

Ruth's own penmanship is very small. *If your employer offers you something, old clothes she doesn't wear anymore, even a food you like to take home, always say no. If she really wants you to have she will insist.*

Avoid families that don't use paper towels. Cloth diapers even worse.

Always put a plastic inside every garbage.

Ruth told me to work for a working mother. "The mothers who stay home want the babies in their cribs for naps," she said, "so they can tiptoe in and peek. You won't get outside all day long."

I have both. For my Monday to Friday, a stay-at-home mom, and a working mother weekends. But each mom gives to me her boy. They sleep in the stroller, or, if I put a blanket down, on the grass. I apply sunblock on the nose because both, they are very pale. I call them my albino grandsons.

I think of what I can write for the book of Ruth. Maybe, I have some advice about silence.

If you are smart, when something happens while you are there, if the baby takes his first step or says the first word, Bing's first was "light," second "French," third "fries," you keep in your private

journal so you will have the true date but do not tell.

You wait and that same evening or the next she will call you, shrieking, Lola, Lola, come here! Look! He's walking!

I am going to Ruth to get a two-day-a-week cleaner for my full-time employers. A cleaning woman—that is a promotion for me. The mother will stay with Bing and they will pay me to make the afternoon journey. Where my employers live, north of Montana, a good helper is what is hard to find, as hard as a good husband, maybe, and as important. I overheard my weekend employer say, "Every woman I know worries more about her nanny's Christmas present than her husband's."

"Mai-ling would be good to clean for your people," Ruth says. "Because she is really too old to chase kids. And the mother knows it. But the father likes the way she irons his shirts. The mother's afraid if Mai-ling goes she'll have to do it herself. So Mai-ling'll be ironing for them until she dies. See, the real problem in our profession is age."

Ruth likes to have a picture of every babysitter. The book is also for memorials. Since we are working, we cannot always attend the ceremonies of each other. The weddings and the baptisms, even the funeral. But we will send a letter to remember. And that will go alone on a page, in Ruth's book.

To scrub my employers' floors and throw out the spoiled from their refrigerator, Ruth gives me a young one from Iloilo, who is working for babysitters' babysitter. The babysitters' babysitter, that is usually one who limps or is fat, that something is wrong with. But this one, she looks clean. From my employers, maybe she can ask a lot. I am already saving them the agency fee.

"Thank you," I say to Ruth in her doorway, looking from inside at the parking lot, which has turned slick, a field of rain. I hit her on the stomach. Living here, with our husbands across the ocean, we touch each other more. "I am taking from you your cleaning lady." In the place of Ruth, the last one still unemployed full time, she is the one who will clean.

I will take her back to meet my employers and to teach her the bus route.

She can sleep in the bed with me tonight, and tomorrow she will start already cleaning. On the bus, light swings over us every few minutes, and then we are dark again. I am thinking of this one next to me and my younger daughters, all around the same age. Here in America everyone wants that they will have a beautiful daughter. In the Philippines we hope for only average. We understand that beauty causes trouble. This road has a bump every so many rotations, so it feels we are on a journey, every so often the swing of light and the bump.

My first employer, in Beverly Hills, wanted me to give her manicure. And I did. I never told anyone, not even my husband. Nestor doesn't want me servant in anybody's house. For me it is only a small shame. But some of the older ladies in the book did every week manicure and pedicure for their mistress, daily touch-ups with the buffer. They took pride. They didn't want that anyone else would touch their lady's nails. Ruth's teacher once revealed as a secret that the lady she worked *she has soft cuticles. Nobody but me touches. Because they easily tear.* A sign I once passed in Quiapo, a bad part of Manila, said:

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Another woman, an Ilocana, wrote that when she went home to Luzon for two weeks, the lady grew a huge clump matted in her hair. Nobody knew how to do the curlers and the combing out, not even the one who owned the head.

I have noticed, in the book of Ruth, the ones from Latin America, they don't write "the mother of" or "my employer." They always say "The Lady."

Who is right? Who is luckier? Some of these babysitters also wait hand and foot on their husbands when they get home. I am the same with my husband and my employer. Not devoted. Except maybe to Bing.

We will have to transfer downtown, go out into the cold wet again. And I have only the one umbrella. This one from Iloilo has a life like me, used to difficulty.

No matter how rich I ever become, I wouldn't want to be like the ladies in the book, so weak from doing too little that they can't even manage their own bodies, the hair on their heads, the nails on the hands and feet. But still, for my children, too, it is different. My girls, all four, the hair grows long down the backs of soft soft sweaters. Not like the one here sitting next to me, bowl chopped short. I don't want that they will work as hard as I do. I am glad they are tucked into warm rooms in my house at home in Tagaytay, not out here with me, waiting for the bus to go back to work in the cold. The rain in the Philippines, it is smaller than here anyway and soft. A mother tries to protect the young. It is natural. Even though this work has made me large of heart, I think, well, something else can make my kids grow. I am not sure what that else will be, schooling maybe. Schooling will make them smart. But what will make them strong? Maybe only I will.

I am here cleaning American toilets, I remind them, so that you can study. The last time I said this, my second eldest said back, "You are trying to make us guilty. Don't worry. We are not using drugs."

Now with this new one to clean twice a week, I will not scrub bathrooms anymore or make beds on Tuesdays or Thursdays. But my children, they don't need to know that. They can remember their mother on her hands and knees, but I have bought already for each one a very thin gold chain with a cross, a tiny diamond in the center. Once, I heard a mother here say to another, when the husband didn't arrive at a school benefit pageant she was chairman for, that he was supposed to attend, "Well. More diamonds?" I decided then, it is better if the jewelries come from me.

The bus stop, it is only five blocks from my employers' house; if the rain would end, a good walk, straight north, with the mountains in front of us, tall palms lining our view. I had planned to say *See, we are here*. But the rain still continues, long, slanting, the palms shake wildly and our shoes ruin in the wet trudge. We walk under tall ragged eucalyptus and also pine, which smell

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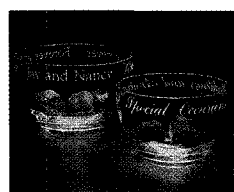
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more in the wet. Finally, we are there.

She looks down when she sees the house. It is a nice house, but not so big, not like some they have driven by in Beverly Hills and Hollywood.

"You were dreaming of a mansion," I say. "But do not worry, it is a good family."

"Ruth said he is movie director?"

"Yes, but he is young and the houses, they are very expensive here. Over a million. It is the television ones, not the movie directors, who live in the two stories."

It was raining also, the night Ruth first brought me. "I have obtained for you your new Mary Poppins, Monday through Friday," she'd called. "Complete with the umbrella."

It is late though now, so we take our shoes off outside and I use my own key.

I expect everyone to be asleep. But the moment we walk in, I know; the house tilts like a shipwrecked boat, lit and somehow sideways. The guy sits in the living room, a drink on the arm of the chair. Some people, they drink to help them sex. But from farther back in the house, I hear sounds. Already the small hairs on my skin stand up but after the dome of a minute, I realize it is not my small charge. This is adult sorrow.

Always be careful the mother, Ruth wrote. Here, with only one or two children, they can become very jealous.

But not this mother. She is young, the age of my second eldest, now studying law at University of Santo Tomas.

The guy looks up at us, our small commotion. "She's got him tonight. I'm in the doghouse."

"I want to introduce you to your new cleaning woman. Tuesday Thursday."

"Oh, hi, good, great. Helen know she's coming?"

"Helen knows."

"Great, she'll be glad, but better wait till tomorrow morning. Like I said, it's been a bad night."

This is more inside than I have ever been.

We change to pajamas and brush teeth. Time three today. I am remembering my first night here, when I was thinking they would not take me. But the nanny they fired was gone then almost

a week already. "They will probably try you," Ruth had said. "Two days without anyone and they are very eager to hire."

"In the morning, I go in the room to fix their bed," I instruct this one from Iloilo. "Don't wait for them to tell you. Americans enjoy to have done for them what a Filipina mother would fix only for children small small. Also, these two, they are not used to having helpers. They do not like to ask."

Making beds for my employers, I know too much of them. The bed of an active couple, it is like the crib of an infant, the sheets twisted and strange stains, brown and yellow. Spit up. Spit down. I know. But their bed here, it is like the bed of a seven-year-old: dry, neat, white, what Bing calls pretty princess perfect perfect. The only stains I ever found were breast milk.

Tonight, it is the first time my buddy-buddy is not in the room with me. Without his breathing, I cannot sleep. I hear in the house the sound of disarray. And closer in the living room, a thump of footsteps in socks, him going around in a circle.

"Never could have happened a generation ago," he mumbles to a telephone. "Would never have happened in our apartment in New York, for Christ's sake."

I put on my slippers, then my robe over. I will walk into the kitchen and offer my employer tea, by holding up the kettle. I do not want to interrupt his phone. Some babysitters do that. They just talk to the employer anyway. It is the ones who grew up in the jungle or some small swamp without telephone.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Lola. Are we keeping you awake?" he says. "Lemme call you back. She's sobbing on the bed, wailing for all the house to hear. The kid's shrieking too, in sympathy. Now the nanny's up. 'We don't live alone anymore,' I pointed out to her."

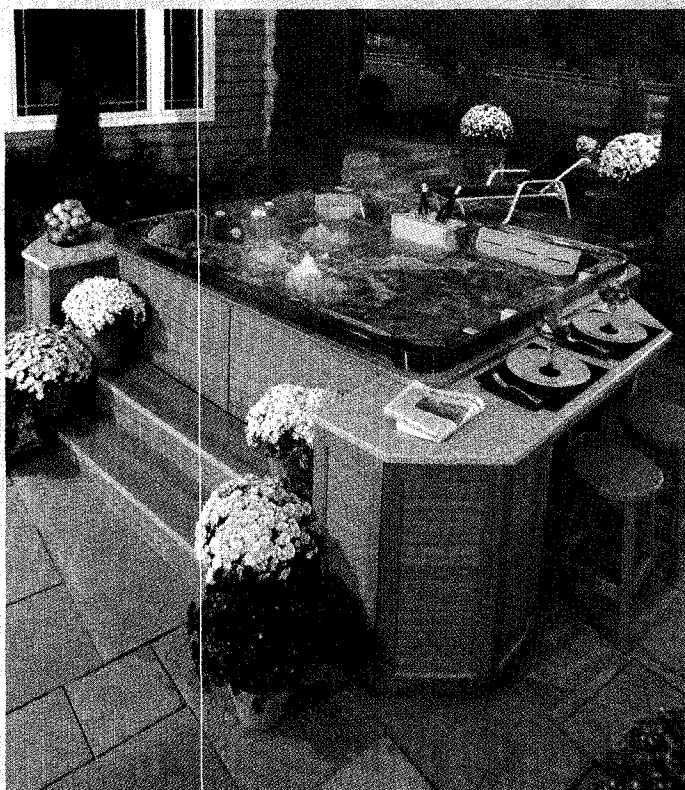
"And what did the mother of Bing answer?" I ask after he hangs up.

"Nothing." He rubs his eyes. "I don't think she's speaking to me."

"I will make tea. Would you like tea or chocolate?"

"I'll take some hot chocolate maybe. Lola, nothing even happened. You were gone, so she had Bing all day by herself

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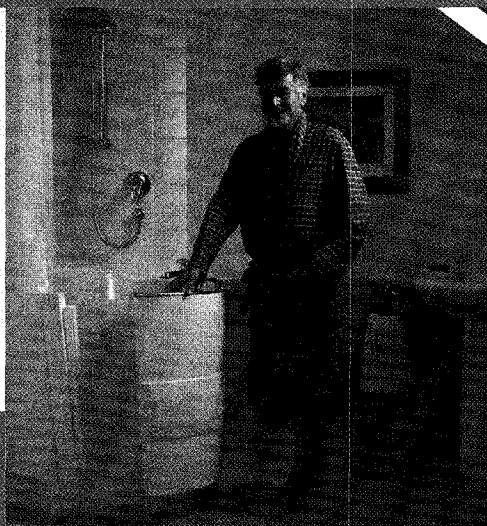
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and she was tired. Who can blame her? When he conked out, she ran a bath. But you know the way Bing goes around pushing buttons on all the phones? Well, the one in our bedroom, the machine, he must've pushed something. And so, I'm having a conversation with Andy, you know Andy, he's really the only guy I ever talk to—I mean, she probably talks to ten of her friends about our *relationship*, her complaints about me and who knows what else, and I don't mind, I really don't even mind—and we're just kind of mouthing off, the way guys do, talking about how stuff isn't the same as when we got married. Oh, God, I said some things I probably shouldn't have, about, you know, *thoughts* I'd had during casting or on the set, and then he said he wondered if he'd ever fall in love again. I kind of agreed with him, just in camaraderie, oh and then I said something about her weight, when she had Bing she put on a little weight, and the breast-feeding, something about breast-feeding. Anyway, she says it'll never be the same for her. And I didn't even do anything. I haven't touched another woman, I haven't even *considered* touching another woman. I was just talking. Sheesh."

"Use your words," I say for a joke, because that is what we tell children to do instead of touch, instead of hit. That is what I am always telling his son.

"Right." But he does not laugh. "Hey, you think you could get through to her?"

"You want that I will be the one to talk to Helen?"

"Maybe bring her a hot chocolate or a tea. Make it tea."

He is the one always watching her diet. Once, they called me to pick up Bing from a restaurant. While I was strapping him into his stroller, my employer said to his wife, "You sure you really want to order that?"

"Yes," she told him. "It's my birthday."

"I can say I am coming for Bing, to let her rest."

But I do not do what he says. I do not give for her tea. I make the white hot chocolate.

I notice my employer's curls touching the ragged edge of his sweater. Even now in the middle of the night, he

is the director. She feels lucky to have him. His talent. She will want me to feel sorry for her, but she will believe I do not really understand, because she is on a higher level, married to fame, married to glory.

When the chocolate is finished I put on a tray with graham crackers. She serves with hollow cinnamon sticks the kids use to blow bubbles.

Helen sleeps face down, one knee up the way of my youngest. Nelly is also the longest of my children. And the most expensive. Medical student. Far Eastern U. Bing is on the bed too, wiggling, fussy. He has every night of his life slept in a crib in a room with the babysitter; he is not used to a grown-up bed without walls. Here people write books about the family bed. We had the family bed. The baby sleeps with the parents until the next one is born. Then out. That is all.

But this baby, he cannot sleep. And here he is the cause of all the trouble.

"Really kind of a mechanical error," my handsome employer said.

"Lola," Helen whispers, her mouth against the sheet. Then she sits, her bare feet above the floor hanging, like a hospital patient.

"You are always making for me Lola's coffee," I say. "Tonight I have for you the white hot chocolate."

She wears blue pajamas with a light-green edge, but the hair is tangled and the eyes and nose are red.

I slip an arm under Bing, pull his blanket, throw him on my shoulder and begin the pat pat. Right away, his finger goes to the mouth, the other hand on the ear. He wants to sleep. He is very tired. It is best if everyone can sleep. I will sprinkle sugar in their closed eyes and they will wake up again happy.

"Lola, he doesn't want me, he never did, not really."

I open one arm to her too, and she loosens to sob. "Okay," I say. "You have your cry."

"I really can't keep on, Lola, not after the things he said. And I don't have anywhere else to go. His friend asked him, was he in love with me when we got married, and he said he thought I was pretty enough, he was in love

enough, I was a good person ..." and at this she breaks down.

"To be a good person, that is not something to cry for." Only the young would cry for that.

"Like a consolation prize. He knows he should love me." Her voice drops and gutters, so the word "love" sounds desperate, an animal noise, something you would hear in a birth or a death, not for an act of romance or union during the middle of life.

"He said to his friend, he said, 'I wanted a bitch and I didn't get one. I did the smart thing. I married a good woman and I expected the rest to follow. What can I say? Some did and some didn't.' Oh, and his friend, his friend even said, 'Well, she's beautiful, at least.' And you know what he said to that? He said, 'Really? You think so? On the outside, maybe. Our insides don't fit.' Then he said, oh, Lola, you know we're going to Hawaii, and he said he was afraid to see me from the back in a bathing suit! He's afraid my *thighs* will jiggle." The shoulders shudder now in convulsions, the breath heaves up and down. This is really the true worst for her. She is always trying to lose the weight.

"And, and, not only that, he says I'm 'chirpy,' that I don't accept the real him. I don't understand the art of complaint. And Lola, you don't know how much he thinks everyone's against him. I spend my days talking him back up into the world."

"I know, I know." For a long time we just rock. And then finally, she is ready to listen. I have seen this with children. You have to wait until they are patient to hear what comes next. That is when I will tell the story.

"I believe with my employer, he is grateful. For you, to have the marriage, Bing, all of this."

When I am talking, I am remembering the day. Before I took the bus and the transfer to the place of Ruth, my little buddy-buddy and I attended play club at the house of China. We have two Chinese adopted, named Emma and Larkin, and a blonde girl with freckles named China.

"Without you, he would have—no life. And I can tell, inside him, he did

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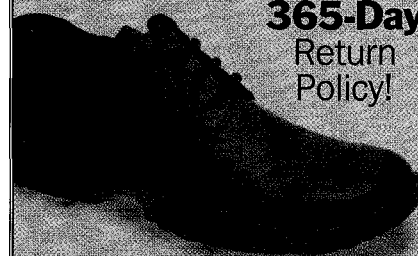
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not believe any of it would be possible." What I am saying, it is also true. He is a person who swings from the top to the very bottom. He is not made for normal life.

"He's said that before too," Helen admits, "that he's grateful." She holds now the cup of chocolate, with both hands, drinks as if chocolate can cure her.

We lounged around the pool, kids and babysitters. Palm-frond shadows checkmarked the light. Before I came here, when I imagined desert, I thought it would be flat, with camels. Here, the desert meets the ocean, with huge waves that clap. Opposites attract.

Kitkat, the babysitter of Simon, stood up, shaking her body into the bikini. "Simo," she said. "When you are big and rich, what will you do with all your money? Maybe you will live on a yacht!"

All the babysitters, even if they are in America one week from a swamp in the jungle, they know what is a yacht and a limousine. The employers do not like us to tell these words to their children. But why not? That is the fun of here.

"I will buy you a house," Simon said.

"Oh," Kitkat murmured, happy in her cheeks, pursing her mouth, to keep it in.

Out of folded newspapers, I can make airplanes, hats, and boats that float. This is a trick of babysitting. We were making paper boats when the mom of China had the idea to go to the lumber store and buy us wood. Here, the mothers will always find a way to make a project much more work.

"And what about me?" Tintin called to Simon.

"I will buy you a house too?"

No one asked Kitkat why she thought Simon would become rich. He is rich now, already. But in the Philippines, we seemed a fortunate family too when I was the age of him. I called to Bing. "How much do you love your Lola?"

He stood with his arms stretching, stretching to points. All that day he puffed his cheeks, blowing, trying to whistle, but nothing came out. "This big," he finally said, then lost his balance and fell, and we all laughed. My happiest times are with other babysitters when we are laughing at our life.

For that you have to be the same. To be above other people, you will have to say good-bye to laughter. My employer, what he does for a living is make jokes. He says some day he is going to make a movie about me. That is the time Lola will become rich.

We sailed the wooden boats by the side of the pool, the kids holding the strings and us holding their shirts so they would not fall in.

The flowers here seem papery, pretty together, not one at a time. If you picked a few for a vase on a table, they will not anymore seem like flowers. I am from a wet island, with trees that drip drip drip, roads that every year flood. Our flowers grow thick and waxy, more pretty the closer you look. Before, I always thought deserts had mirages because they could not hold real water. But this one does.

"Oh, you know what else Andy said, that's the friend? He said, you married her before you became yourself. Lola, I don't know how I can go from here. I'm a woman not loved by her husband."

"There are words of the night," I say, "best forgotten in every marriage."

"Is it always one way or the other, the one person loving more?"

"Some people, they just have more love. It is easier for them. Others, they are less inside."

On the bedside table, in a porcelain shell, wait her diamond earrings with heavy screws on the back, so they will not fall off. Her life as a mother, it is good, but too much alone. One mother, one child. It should be a houseful of people.

"But I had boyfriends before who loved me!" She slams back face down on the pillow, sobbing in heaves again. Even so, I have little one asleep on my shoulder. Now his finger holds on to my ear. I let her cry for a few minutes. Then I bend down to present to her the sleeping face.

"But, ah, if you married someone else, you would not have this one. You could be in the other position, but your husband, he could never live that way. He is not strong enough. And you, you are best here too. Otherwise, you would feel less."

"How about you, Lola? In your marriage." See. Now she is beginning to remember curiosity again. That is always a good sign.

"When I came here I had already turned forty-seven. To a mother, romance is a belonging of the children. It is an obstacle I worry for, like drugs." The young babysitters, they are not like me, looking back across the Pacific to an older world, saying goodnight to the Philippines. They face the dry continent here. They see big skies. Especially, they are thinking of cowboys.

"My Nestor, he is a very quiet man. We have been married a long time. We have worn each other down. Two pencil stubs. Look, it is almost light. No more rain." I nudge her as best I can with one hand, while the other is crooked around him on my shoulder. "Come, you sleep a little more, then go in the shower. Wash your hair and put something, a cream on your eyes."

"How should I be with him? Maybe I should have seemed not to care." She is all the time embarrassed. But it is a young embarrassment, nothing at all like real shame. "I really can't sleep."

When I take the heavy boy to my room, I find the ragged bear he uses to hold on to when he goes to bed. I bring it to the mother, tuck her in.

"Lola is my mother and Dr. Schneider's my father," I overheard her say a long time ago. Dr. Schneider, he is the psychiatrist she drives to see once a week.

The new housecleaner from Iloilo stands, up and dressed, in leggings and bright sneakers, ready to begin. But today, there are no beds to make.

In the kitchen, the guy looks up at me from the table where he is slicing a persimmon. He is the last part to fix. Then all the gears of the house, they will be moving. It can be a morning like any other.

At home, I could talk more to the women, but there, I was not really working. Women, they want it all to be pretty. They want it to be all about love. The men are the ones who know I am working a job, with many tasks, and for that I am paid a salary. The women, they want to believe it is because I love their children. I do love their children.

But I am working too for money.

My employer looks at me and shrugs. What does he do with all that love? he is saying. How can he use it in the business of daily life?

His face looks smudged, lifting from his sweated arms. "So what should I do?"

"If you are asking me, I think, something of appreciation. A gift for commitment and apology."

"Like flowers or something?"

"Flowers *and* something. Maybe diamond."

More diamonds. That is a phrase I heard, I may as well use it.

"Sure, that's a good idea, sure. You just tell me, Lola."

"Make a play date today with your wife. For the jewelry store. I will take Bing out the whole time. You go ahead and have your fun. Make a mess. I will clean up everything later."

The life of Lola was never young. I knew, a long time ago, that my Nestor was a person to cherish, but if the family would move forward, if my children would earn professional degrees, it would be me to pay it. Anyway, what can a foreign man do here?

By the time I slip out the door, pushing Bing in the stroller, I have sent the father to the back of the house, carrying a tray of breakfast, her coffee made the way she makes it, with a stick of bougainvillea I cut from her garden.

It is like a top, if the throw is correct, the hand can leave and the wooden piece will keep on for a long time spinning.

Bing is just barely awake, but I talk to my buddy-buddy anyway. I tell him we will attend the park, play in the sandbox with his friends. Emma, Larkin, Chi-na, Simon, and Luke. He purses his lips and blows. A high, thin, wavery sound comes—the first whistle—and then he smiles. I will not tell to my employers, but maybe I can make him to do it again, for the other babysitters. Kitkat, Lita, Tintin, Mai-ling. So they can hear too, on the day he learned. We are the working mothers. ▀

Mona Simpson is the author of Anywhere But Here (1987), The Lost Father (1992), A Regular Guy (1996), and Off Keck Road (2000). This story is adapted from her forthcoming novel, My Hollywood.



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In 1922, a small watchmaker in Switzerland patented the first automatic watch to display the day, month and date. Only 7 of these magnificent timepieces were ever made and this watch was almost lost to history. Today, they are so rare that one original chronograph watch would probably fetch more than \$300,000 at auction.

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THE NEXT TESTAMENT

If the Bible were being compiled for the first time right now, what would we put in it? Making the case for a NEW New Revised Standard Version

BY CULLEN MURPHY

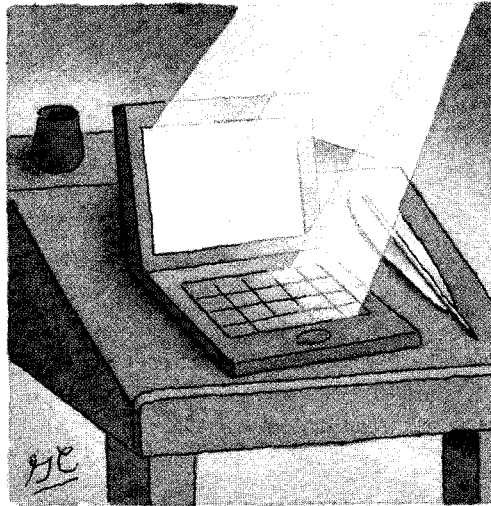
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The facts of the case are familiar to almost everyone. A few months ago, as winter was setting in, Judge Roy Moore, the chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, was removed from office for his refusal to heed a federal court order. U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson had instructed Moore to clear the state judicial building's rotunda of a 2.6-ton granite monument to the Ten Commandments, arguing that the monument violated the constitutional principle of separation of Church and State. The monument had been placed in the rotunda by Moore in 2001, and he had ignored all entreaties to get rid of it.

The saga of "Roy's Rock" followed a predictable pattern. Liberal and secular groups railed against the intrusion of an overtly religious symbol into the highest state court in Alabama. Moore's supporters argued that the Ten Commandments broadly represent "the moral foundation of law." As the controversy raged, atheists asked to have a monument of their own placed in the court's rotunda: a statue of an atom. Judge Moore turned them down (though there would have been more than enough room for a life-size rendition).

Well, the battle is over now. What remains, as always, is the double life the Bible leads. On the one hand, it is obviously a religious document—for believers, either literally or "in some sense" (as a squirrely Anglican might have it) the very word of God. On the other hand, it is a foundational text of our culture, an artifact that has shaped even secular aspects of Western civilization.

What pretty much everyone agrees on is that whatever its nature, the Bible is a collection of many bits of writing, representing many kinds of literature, and that its various pieces came into existence at different moments over more than a millennium. As the Ten Commandments case sputtered on, I began to indulge a fantasy. Suppose a commit-



tee were formed and given this charge: select a collection of texts in English, written over a period of centuries, that somehow fulfills the same functions as the books of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament—the Next Testament, it could be called. What would be in such a collection? To be clear: the charge would be not to compile some new "canon"—some kind of Great Books course—but, rather, to assemble the raw materials for something that would have the same cultural feel a few thousand years hence that the Bible has now.

Start with, say, the Book of Genesis—the classic creation story. Scholars explain that the book as we know it is probably an intertwining of work from three main ancient sources—one author designated J (the "Jahwist" or "Yahwist" source, because this writer refers to God as *YHWH*), the second designated E (because this writer refers to God as *Elohim*), and the third designated P (the priestly source). The creation story in our new, modern Bible might be woven from sources known as W, H, and D. W would refer to the physicist Steven Weinberg's *The First Three Minutes*, an account of the Big Bang. H would refer to Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of*

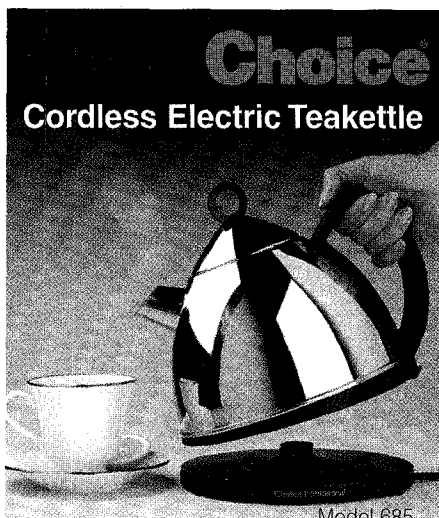
Time. W and H have plenty of the requisite awe, menace, and wonder, and although both eschew theology, they have things to say about meaning. (From W: "The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless.")

The oldest of the sources for the new Genesis, D, would be Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. D is by far the most humane of the three writers—warm, observant, a superb anecdotalist, similar in some respects to the old Bible's J. And he would provide knotty issues for future

scholars to argue over. For instance, which version of *Origin's* last sentence should be accepted as orthodox? Should it be the first edition's "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been Originally breathed into a few forms or into one ..."? Or the second edition's version, in which after the word "breathed" D inserted the words "by the Creator"?

The biblical books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy are largely collections of laws, rituals, and recommended practices—the ingredients of a coherent social

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order. The Next Testament version could be fashioned from several sources—*Jane Brody's Good Food Book* and *The Joy of Sex*, perhaps, but also the Internal Revenue Service's Form 1040 information booklet, *The Rules*, the U.S. Army's *Ranger Handbook*, the columns of Ann Landers, and the Mayflower Compact.

One-for-one analogues of biblical books come to mind for some portions of the Next Testament. In the curious book that bears his name, Jonah is engulfed in a mysterious experience and emerges transformed. Would *Through the Looking-Glass* or *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* fit the bill? The erotically charged poetry of the Song of Songs—said to be the book most frequently copied in medieval monasteries—finds an equivalent in the Sonnets of William Shakespeare. A possible replacement candidate for the entire Book of Psalms would be the poems of Emily Dickinson. Dickinson is more taut and reserved than the psalmist, to put it mildly, but many of the same themes (loss, solace, searching engagement with the divine) are there.

The Book of Proverbs is traditionally ascribed to Solomon, though it is really an amalgam of sayings ("Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler") by many sages. In the Next Testament one could capture something of its spirit with Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanack*. ("Search others for their virtues, thyself for thy vices.") But to cater to our own era's contradictory taste for the bitterly cynical and the vapidly inspirational, one probably ought to stir in at least a few apothegms from Ambrose Bierce's *The Devil's Dictionary* and Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet*.

As for the books of the (real) prophets, the Next Testament could have a Book of Martin (for the speeches of Martin Luther King Jr.), a Book of Primo (for Primo Levi's memoir *Survival in Auschwitz*), and a Book of Edmund (for Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, which glimpsed the dangers of utopian faith). There could be a Book of Rachel (for Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*), and a Book of Aldous (for Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*).

The Book of Job is a category unto itself: a huge swath of contemporary literature implicitly evokes Job—be it the

Job who accepted his fate as the Lord cast woe upon him or, more strikingly, the Job who angrily challenged the Lord and His justice. The problem here is not a dearth of analogues but a torrent of them: the works of Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Koestler, Wiesel.

Job, of course, is a book of the Hebrew Bible, notwithstanding the jaunty affirmation by Howard Dean, as he sought to show off his scriptural savvy in advance of the southern primaries, that it was his favorite book of the New Testament. As for the actual New Testament books, finding analogues would take some thinking.

Only one seems straightforward. The mystifying and disturbing tropes of the Christian biblical book called Revelation (or sometimes Apocalypse) took shape in a context of real-world horror and persecution. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, composed after the carnage of World War I, and incomprehensibly lyrical in the same way that Revelation often is, could take its place in the Next Testament. But what about the Gospels? My own thoughts initially turn to literature touching on Lincoln and the Civil War, America's central saga of shame and hope. And what of the Epistles of Paul? Should we look to Orwell?

Obviously, much remains to be done. Creating Next Testament analogues for the "historical" books of the Bible would be tricky; and then there's the whole issue of the Apocrypha—those texts associated with Scripture that have lesser status, such as Tobit, Susanna, and Judith. (There would be plenty to work with here, light and dark: think of stories like O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi" and Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery.")

Also remaining to be figured out is what the Ten Commandments should consist of in the Next Testament—not a trivial issue, given that a majority of Americans today would probably align with only about five of the original ones. Fortunately, there's no need to settle everything at once. It took centuries for the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament to congeal into their present form. The proposed Next Testament, unlike Roy's Rock, is not yet carved in stone. ▀

Cullen Murphy is The Atlantic's managing editor.



MUSIC

GOD'S LONELY MAN

Johnny Cash was a Christian who didn't cast stones, a patriot who wasn't a bully

BY FRANCIS DAVIS

.....

In 1956, when he recorded "I Walk the Line" for Sun Records, Johnny Cash became an overnight sensation. But it was his many years of singing as if he knew from personal experience all of humankind's strengths and failings—as if he had both committed murder and been accepted into God's light—that made him a favorite of liberals and conservatives, MTV and the Grand Ole Opry, Gary Gilmore and Billy Graham. A tall piece of timber, Cash was often likened to John Wayne, to whom he otherwise bore only the slightest resemblance. The biggest difference was that Wayne never really lived up to (and probably only dimly comprehended) the democratic ideals he personified on screen—which were more likely the ideals of the directors he worked with anyway. Cash took on a greater variety of roles as a singer than Wayne did as an actor, and both he and the characters he gave voice to admitted their weaknesses. From song to song he was a cowboy or a white outcast who rode with Indians, a

family man or a drifter, a believer in eternal life or a condemned murderer with no tomorrows anywhere. His credibility as all of these owed as much to the moral effort involved in endlessly putting himself in others' shoes as it did to his professional savvy in putting a song across.

Waking to the radio last September 12 and hearing that Cash had died in the middle of the night, I remembered thinking about Cash just days after the attacks two years earlier, while watching a nationally televised prayer service attended by the President and the First Lady and featuring a performance by the mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves. It should have been moving—but as I listened to a mannered black diva render an old spiritual as if it were a European art song, it was impossible not to think that the occasion called for a more home-grown performance style. If the point was to rally Americans to draw on their inner resources, it would have been a comfort to hear from Johnny Cash, who stood for what Christopher Wren, his

first biographer, called "the dignity of the commonplace and the redeeming grace of hard knocks."

I thought of Cash frequently in the weeks and months that followed 9/11, as music written in response to the attacks began to be released. With few exceptions, rock's singer-songwriters lapsed into their habitual pattern of dissent, and country singers beat the drums for retaliation. All of it reminded me of that period in the late 1960s, before public opinion solidified against the Vietnam War, when we heard "The Ballad of the Green Berets" and "I Ain't Marchin' Anymore"—neither side giving any ground—and when Cash became a voice of reason. The lyrics to "I Walk the Line" pledge sexual fidelity regardless of temptation; but whenever Cash performed this song in the early 1970s (as he surely must have at every show), he might just as well have been describing his principled balancing act in opposing our military policy in Southeast Asia while continuing to voice support for our troops. "Singing in Vietnam Talking Blues," "What Is Truth?," and "The Man in Black"—Cash's antiwar songs—weren't among his best numbers, and they didn't really say anything that countless rockers and folkies hadn't said already. They were powerful by virtue of who sang them: not a hippie leading a chant at Woodstock but a

country-music icon who was risking the sort of ire unleashed last year against Natalie Maines, of the Dixie Chicks, when she told a British audience she was embarrassed that George W. Bush was a fellow Texan.

In 1969 *The New York Times* ran a Sunday magazine article on Cash titled "First Angry Man of Country Singers"—a reference not just to Cash's activism in behalf of prisoners and Indians but also to his having generally made life miserable for those closest to him, a few years earlier, when he was taking huge daily doses of amphetamines and barbiturates. If suicidal habits and self-destructive behavior are the primary definition of "angry," Hank Williams (for one) was years ahead of Cash. But unless you count Woody Guthrie—which the Nashville establishment does not, even though it should—Cash *was* country music's first protest singer. "Singing in Vietnam Talking Blues" was released as a single in May of 1971, and it isn't much of an exaggeration to say that his performance of the song on television early that year marked a turning point: If Johnny Cash wasn't buying this war, why should anybody?

That performance was on Cash's own TV show, which aired on ABC from 1969 to 1971. According to his own accounts, Cash fought only two battles with his network bosses, who eventually gave in to him on both. One disagreement arose from his desire to introduce a hymn by declaring his own faith in Jesus. The other was over an appearance by Pete Seeger, whom Cash defended as "a good American as I've ever met." One can imagine the same thing being said of Cash.

In 1975, when an interviewer for *Penthouse* asked him if he was a political radical, he replied, "I'm just tryin' to be a good Christian"—a good Christian, but not a professional one, despite his many songs about Jesus and his tours as a member of his friend Billy Graham's Crusades. He was a Christian who didn't cast stones, a patriot who didn't play the flag card.

Cash's image evolved in tandem with his musical style. The albums that he recorded on the fly at Folsom and San Quentin in the late 1960s made do

with a bare-bones instrumentation that recalled his early singles for Sun, and their crossover into pop may have been what convinced him that he was better off without the background choirs and instrumental "sweetening" featured on most of that day's country recordings, including too many of his own. He dispensed with other frills as well. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, around the same time that Frank Sinatra was popularizing the "concept" album, Cash brought the idea to country music. His album jackets often showed him costumed in keeping with a musical theme: he was a farmhand on *Now, There Was a Song!*, for example, and a gunfighter on both *Ride This Train* and *Johnny Cash Sings the Ballads of the True West*. By 1969, however, he had settled on one style of dress. In his frock coat and morning pants, he was "the man in black"—a look and a nickname, but also a singular persona. Though he said in the 1971 song of that name that he wore black to remind himself and his audiences of society's injustices, he must have known that it was flattering to him—and made him stand out from that era's rhinestone cowboys.

He was in his late thirties and already had plenty of mileage on him when he was discovered by television; longer hair and the shadows and dents of middle age brought out the character in his face, making him almost handsome. He appeared in a couple of movies around this time, but gave what I think of as his finest performance in John Frankenheimer's *I Walk the Line* (1970), for which he merely supplied the score. His songs do such a good job of letting us know what's going on in the mind of the character played by Gregory Peck (a small-town Tennessee sheriff in the grip of a midlife crisis) that it's as if he and Peck were sharing the role. The movie was a flop at the box office, but "Flesh and Blood"—perhaps the single most beautiful song Cash ever wrote, and one whose lyrics could stand alone as inspired nature poetry—reached No. 1 on the country charts.

With maturity Cash grew into his voice. To read his obituaries, one might think that his credibility as a singer depended entirely on his credibility as a man. True, he never developed his upper range to the point where he could

trust it, and the clear emphasis he gave every single word would have precluded gliding from note to note even if he had been able to. Among the singers of his own generation he lacked the bravura and the sheer lung power of such country Carusos as Elvis Presley, Conway Twitty, Roy Orbison, Ferlin Husky, and the young Waylon Jennings. We tend not to value deep voices as much as we do high, soaring ones, perhaps because the effort involved in producing a low note is less apparent. Something about hearing a singer go low strikes most ears as a trick, a human special effect. The bass singer does the grunt work in doo-wop and rhythm and blues, sometimes literally. There is a style of country music, however, in which a male singer's descent to a virile low note at the end of a phrase, or for the closing chorus, supplies the same payoff as a soul singer's falsetto—one conveys masculine certainty and the other uncontrollable passion, but each signifies a moment of truth. No country singer was better at this than Cash, and few singers in any field of music have been as expressive or as instantly recognizable.

Cash wasn't usually thought of as a folk singer, but in terms of updating traditional material and writing new songs in the same vein, he was the closest thing to an authentic troubadour to emerge since the end of World War II. "Don't Take Your Guns to Town" (1958), about a headstrong young man who comes to a violent end after ignoring his mother's advice, was based on an Irish ballad that found its way to the American South. "Five Feet High and Rising" (1959), about the devastation caused by a 1937 flood of the Mississippi, was entirely his own creation. Anyone listening to these two songs and unfamiliar with their sources would be hard put to guess which was traditional and which original. Possibly at the instigation of Seeger and Bob Dylan, Cash performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964. It was Freedom Summer, and the festival was a recruiting ground for the voter-registration movement and for leftist causes in general. The presence of a country-music star must have raised a few eyebrows. But the organizers must have recognized that Cash virtually

defined folk music in his relationship to his primary audience—a country-music audience that embraced him because his music reflected their experience, even if his political beliefs occasionally differed from theirs.

Cash was one of the original Sun rockabillys, along with Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, and the forgotten Warren Smith and Billy Lee Riley—like him, southerners who had grown up aspiring to country stardom before anyone had ever heard of rock-and-roll. Yet Bono, Bruce Springsteen, and Tom Petty smiled on Cash as one of their own: they heard something close to rock-and-roll in his music, and recognized it for sure in his independent stance. After country radio turned its back on his generation in the 1990s, in favor of young beefcake cowpokes like Toby Keith and Tim McGraw, Cash attracted the attention of MTV by recording his own versions of songs by groups such as Soundgarden, Depeche Mode, and Nine Inch Nails for Rick Rubin, a producer identified with rap and heavy metal.

For all that, whenever Cash made the Top 40 (as he did with some regularity for twenty years, beginning in 1956 with "I Walk the Line"), it was always with what sounded like a country song, not one that conformed to current pop trends. Country-music record buyers didn't extend him the same loyalty, nor did the Nashville power brokers. Cash was a posthumous winner in three categories at last year's Country Music Association Awards. *American IV: The Man Comes Around*, his fourth album for Rubin and the last to be released before his death, was named Album of the Year, and his version of "Hurt"—a song written by Trent Reznor, of Nine Inch Nails—won for Single of the Year and Music Video of the Year. But there was an air of atonement to these awards, which were given out in November, less than two months after Cash's death. Not counting his election to the association's Hall of Fame, in 1980 (the equivalent of being kicked upstairs), he hadn't received a CMA award since 1969. The association had completely ignored *American Recordings*, his first album for Rubin and arguably his greatest work, even though it won a Grammy as the best

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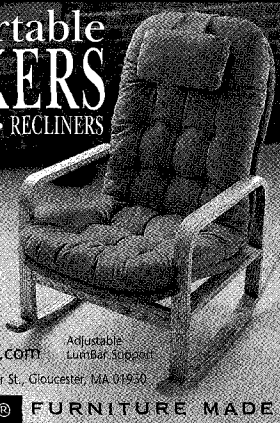
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contemporary folk recording of 1994. Cash was in any case never part of the country-music establishment, and at the height of his celebrity, in the early 1970s, he towered above it.

Cash wasn't an outlaw—just an outsider, in a way that had nothing to do with stage image. He even seemed a little out of place in the Highwaymen, the country-music supergroup he started recording with in the 1980s, which also featured the shaggy Nashville "outlaws" Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, and Kris Kristofferson. His singing and the way he carried himself did influence a number of country singers of his generation and slightly younger, most notably Merle Haggard and Kristofferson. But among today's younger country performers, the only ones who sound like they've listened much to Cash are somehow related to him: his daughter Rosanne Cash, his stepdaughter Carlene Carter, and his former sons-in-law Marty Stuart and Rodney Crowell. Where his influence is still widespread is in the work of performers ignored by country stations but likely to be on the playlists of classic-rock stations and public radio's *World Café*—such younger singer-songwriters as Steve Earle and Billy Bragg, along with Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.

In the movie *Taxi Driver*, Cybill Shepherd tells Robert De Niro that he reminds her of Kris Kristofferson's song "The Pilgrim": "He's a walking contradiction / Partly truth and partly fiction." That song was actually Kristofferson's homage to Cash; but the line from the movie that best describes him is "God's lonely man," De Niro's reference to himself. Cash seemed a man alone even when surrounded by his family on stage, and there was a brooding quality to even his songs about doing right by his fellow man and finding redemption through Jesus.

"Cheating" songs are a dime a dozen in country, but the one of Cash's that most readily comes to mind may be unique: his adaptation of the traditional ballad "The Long Black Veil" whose narrator chooses to hang for a murder he didn't commit rather than reveal that he was in bed with his best friend's wife on the night in question. His songs about the wild life usually end with

someone either serving time or bleeding to death on a barroom floor.

Cash identified with society's victims, but the true measure of his compassion was his realization that some of us become victims of our own dark impulses. The inmates we hear cheering for him on the albums he recorded at Folsom and San Quentin sensed his empathy for them, even though they may have misinterpreted it. According to legend, many of these men believed that Cash was one of them—that he had served hard time himself. In truth his jail time was limited to what he often humorously described as "seven one-night stands" in the 1950s and early 1960s, all after busts for drunkenness or possession when he was popping pills. On both albums the loudest cheers—the most frightening ones—come during "Folsom Prison Blues," when Cash delivers his famous line about killing a man in Reno "just to watch him die." The prisoners we hear whooping at that line took it to be a boast; but Cash once wrote that he had written it after asking himself what was the most unforgivable reason he could imagine for taking another person's life. He was the favorite singer of Gary Gilmore, who was especially fond of "Don't Take Your Guns to Town." It's too bad Gilmore didn't live to hear "Delia's Gone," the opening number on *American Recordings*. No other song I know has ever probed so chillingly the mind of a murderer—particularly the ability of a psychopath to dissociate himself from his own deeds.

For the most part, *American Recordings* presented Cash alone, accompanying himself on guitar. The album's beauty was in its starkness and simplicity, with Rubin producing Cash in much the same way that country blues performers were recorded in the 1930s: just sit the man down and roll the tapes while he sings whatever he wants to—his own songs along with others he knows and likes. In their own way, Cash's interpretations of Leonard Cohen's "Bird on a Wire" and Nick Lowe's "The Beast in Me" (a song actually written for him by another of his former sons-in-law) were just as compelling as "Delia's Gone." Three of the album's new songs rank among the most touching Cash ever

wrote: "Oh, Bury Me Not," a variation on an old cowboy lament with a half-spoken introduction in which Cash tells us he senses God's hand in nature more than he does in churches; "Drive On," in which he sings from the point of view of a Vietnam veteran who's leading a normal life though still haunted by his wartime experiences; and "Like a Soldier," a love song presumably addressed either to Jesus or to June Carter Cash, and so gorgeous it hardly matters which.

American Recordings represented an apotheosis, but the albums that followed it were overproduced and unextraordinary; the musicians who accompanied Cash on them somehow managed to sound at once sympathetic and superfluous. Cash was no longer in good voice, and the newer songs that Rubin chose for him (death figured in quite a few) wallowed in a kind of adolescent self-pity that made them all wrong for a performer who, whatever else he was, was always an adult. It turns out that some of the best performances Cash recorded for Rubin were passed over for release until after his death, and finally surfaced on the unfortunately titled *Cash Unearthed*, a five-CD boxed set that arrived in stores in November. My favorite of these is Cash's version of Billy Joe Shaver's "If I Give My Soul," in which a man bargains with the Lord in much the same way that Robert Johnson is said to have bargained with the devil at a Mississippi crossroads—except that instead of prowess on the guitar, this man's asking price is sobriety and winning back the love of his estranged wife and son. It's a song full of adult sorrow that leaves "Hurt" in the dust.

Whatever his actual relationship to rock-and-roll, Cash was the only surviving performer from its first wave who was still in the thick of things at the beginning of the new century (Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard having long ago accepted their fate as oldies acts). Rock-and-roll has been with us for almost fifty years now—an eternity by the standards of popular music, but well short of the average human life-span. Until very recently the only dead rock-and-rollers were the ones

who died young—casualties of their own bad habits, of car wrecks and plane crashes, of wronged women and obsessed fans with guns. For all their shortcomings, Cash's last few CDs exerted considerable power by presenting us with something we hadn't really heard before in pop music: a man long past middle age confronting his own mortality, and implicitly asking us to contemplate ours.

Cash made the cover of *Time* following his death, and inside was an eloquent meditation on his career by Richard Corliss. But what really caught my eye was an op-ed piece in the *Philadelphia Daily News*, headlined "WHY THIS LESBIAN LOVED THE MAN IN BLACK." The writer, Debbie Woodell, lovingly recalled how she and her brother used to sing along as children to their grandparents' Lefty Frizzell and Eddy Arnold records. "But not Johnny. With Johnny, we listened." There was a tribute to Cash at the Country Music Awards in November, with Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Travis Tritt, Sheryl Crow, Hank Williams Jr., and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band all singing his songs and wearing black in his honor. Yet to me, a more meaningful tribute was the Johnny Cash album covers I saw in the windows of a few New York used-record stores well into the fall. Many of these shops didn't even carry country music; the owners or employees had brought in albums from their own collections. It reminded me of a scene in the movie *High Fidelity*, when John Cusack, playing the owner of a store called Championship Vinyl, faces us and says, deadpan, "My all-time favorite book is Johnny Cash's autobiography *Cash*, by Johnny Cash." Nothing if not ironic, he's aware of the humor in his repetition, but you can tell he sincerely loves saying the name. There are some of us for whom music is a form of religion as well as an addiction, filling the same need in our lives that our President says Scripture fills in his. If the point of having Cash record songs by Depeche Mode and Nine Inch Nails was to make it hip to like him again, Rubin needn't have bothered. For us, it's always been hip to like Johnny Cash. You could even say it's one of the definitions. ▀

Francis Davis is a contributing editor of The Atlantic.

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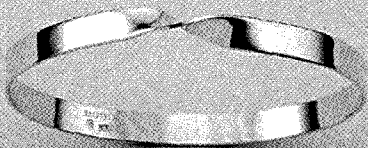


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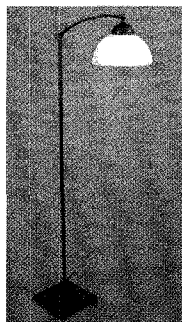
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MOVIES

WHEN THE FRONT PAGE MEETS THE BIG SCREEN

Hollywood is not a reliable moral arbiter of anything, so it's not surprising that when it holds a mirror up to journalism, Shattered Glass is the result

BY MARK BOWDEN

.....

Given how poorly journalists usually fare in opinion polls (ranking somewhere near tax collectors), and how plainly their excesses figure in history and in daily life, it is remarkable what a staunch ally the profession seems to have in Hollywood. The reporter may be even more of a celluloid staple than the private detective. In many films a character is only incidentally a journalist: for example, Clark Gable in *It Happened One Night*, Jimmy Stewart in *The Philadelphia Story*, Kevin Spacey in *The Shipping News*, and Naomi Watts in *The Ring*. In these films the scribbling profession simply provides a way into the middle of a romance, a mystery, or whatever else the movie may be about. Other movies – *The China Syndrome*, *Meet John Doe* – deal with the role of journalism in creating celebrity or public events. A few years ago there was a fascination with the blurring of journalism and entertainment, satirized in the manipulative producers played by Dustin Hoffman in *Wag the Dog* and Ed Harris in *The Truman Show*. Often the reporter is just an irreverent narrator, affording a convenient voice to explain difficult patches of plot, as in *Inherit the Wind*, *In Cold Blood*, and *L.A. Confidential* (although in the last Danny DeVito's character gets a little too involved). Countless more movies depict journalists as pests, swarming like insects, and an entire subgenre deals exclusively with the quasi-journalistic phenomenon of Hunter S. Thompson.

A surprising number of movies are actually about the profession. In recent years alone movies featuring strong journalistic themes have included *Almost Famous*, *Veronica Guerin* (and *When the Sky Falls*, an earlier film about Guerin), *Live From Baghdad*, *True Crime*, *Deadline*, *Conspiracy of Silence*, *Country of My Skull*, *Adaptation*, and, most recently, *Shattered Glass*. Among their forebears are, most notably, *Citizen Kane*,

The Front Page, *Woman of the Year*, *All the President's Men*, and *Absence of Malice*. Superman, of course, doubles as a newspaper reporter, and just about every leading man in Hollywood has played a reporter at one time or another. The celluloid journalist owns a piece of our national soul.

America has always had a soft spot for the clever, no-nonsense common man or woman making a buck by his or her wits, which is how reporters have most often been portrayed. In most older films even duplicitous reporters turn out to be decent and kindhearted, like Barbara Stanwyck in *Meet John Doe* and Jean Arthur in *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (or, more recently, Winona Ryder in the remake *Mr. Deeds*). In the 1920s and 1930s reporters on film were often crusaders, waging war on gangland empires or exposing corruption in city hall. Now and then a dedicated reporter would rescue a condemned man from execution (a story line resurrected by Clint Eastwood in *True Crime*), or go undercover to expose social injustice, as Gregory Peck did in *Gentleman's Agreement*. The film *Almost Famous*, celebrated primarily for revealing the star quality of the young actress Kate Hudson, was largely about the ethical issues faced by a young reporter for *Rolling Stone* who is drawn into the world of pop music he so admires, and is very nearly swallowed by it.

Movies reflect changing social attitudes toward journalism, and have from time to time critically examined and influenced the profession. The 1976 classic *All the President's Men* was the high-water mark for reportorial heroism on film, showing the Fourth Estate vigilantly protecting the public from the corrupt and the powerful. In portraying Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman nailed the white-collar hustle of the modern reporter right down to the basic

repertoire of newsroom white lies—pretending to know more than one knows, insinuating sources that one doesn't have, and so on. The movie captured perfectly the look and feel of the *Washington Post* newsroom, and Jascn Robards basically became Benjamin Bradlee, alternately grilling and backing his reporters. The movie makes reporting seem a whole lot more pulse-pounding than it is (in thirty years, alas, I have never met an anonymous source in the shadows of an empty parking garage), and exaggerates the *Post's* role in bringing down the Nixon White House, but it captures a genuinely remarkable episode in the history of journalism. Indeed, reporters and editors have never looked so good, or so important, as they do in that film. So it's little wonder that the achievement of Woodward and Bernstein, amplified by their best-selling book and by this movie, loosed a flood of young investigative reporters on newsrooms in the mid-1970s.

I preceded this deluge; otherwise I might be doing something else for a living. When I was hired by *The Baltimore News-American*, in 1973, the day after graduating from college, it was still fairly easy to land a job on a big-city newspaper. I just walked in with an introduction from a college professor and was put to work. Many of the older reporters I worked with in the early years didn't have college degrees, and they chuckled at the very idea of newspapering as a "profession." To them, a "journalist" was a dead reporter. There was a lot of hustle and con in their definition of the job, and more than one of them had better-paying work on the side, sometimes related to their newspaper beat; our real-estate editor dabbled in real estate, for instance, and some of our police reporters also worked for local defense attorneys. Six years later I was at *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and standards and criteria had changed dramatically. A strict code of conduct governed reporters. Employment at a big-city daily required not just a college degree but five or six years of experience at a smaller newspaper, and demanded a facility for investigation and analysis that would have driven my older Baltimore colleagues straight to the bourbon in their bottom drawers.

Many in this new wave of distinctly white-collar reporters saw the primary goal of journalism as exposing corruption. They were after bad guys, particularly bad guys in government. They saw themselves as freelance local prosecutors—without the power to subpoena or indict, perhaps, but with the massive weight of industrial presses behind them. A newspaper could force government probes and explode the minor fiefs of a local bureaucracy. It could reveal the improper connections between politicians and businessmen, and give voice to the concerns of the poor and the powerless. In an earlier era the most glamorous job on the paper might have been covering crime. Now the glamour was in uncovering crime, and the most coveted role became that of the investigative reporter. Big newspapers formed

kind of stories that were turned into movies (*In Cold Blood*, *The Right Stuff*, *Honor Thy Father*, *The Executioner's Song*, *The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight*), but unlike Woodward and Bernstein, they weren't the heroes of those movies. They were every bit as investigative as any other reporter, often more so, but they asked more questions, usually broader and deeper questions, and they could really write. Motivation interested them more than guilt. A local officeholder who trades influence and reputation for a \$5,000 bribe makes for a boffo scoop, but the better story is why he would do that. The goal of these journalists wasn't to send someone to jail but to tell great stories, to capture the moving pageant of their times. I would have traded a dozen jailed local pols for one memorably written and reported story.



Paul Newman in *Absence of Malice*

investigative teams, freeing reporters to dig for malfeasance for months or even years. Most of the major awards in journalism went to reporters doing this kind of work.

My ambitions, and those of many other reporters, were different. I had been drawn to reporting by the New Journalists of the 1960s and 1970s, writers such as Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese, Norman Mailer, and Jimmy Breslin. These reporters were less interested in exposing corruption than in crafting nonfiction to read like the best novels and short stories. They wrote the

In the heyday of the prosecutorial journalist, reporters felt mighty important. Hollywood went along. When the spy played by Robert Redford in *Three Days of the Condor* realizes that his own CIA is after him, he trumps the highest levels of government by telling *The New York Times*. Self-congratulation can become corrosive, and a powerful corrective came in the form of Sydney Pollack's great 1981 film *Absence of Malice*, starring Paul Newman and Sally Field. It showed that what passes for a great investigative story is often nothing more than information leaked by public officials who

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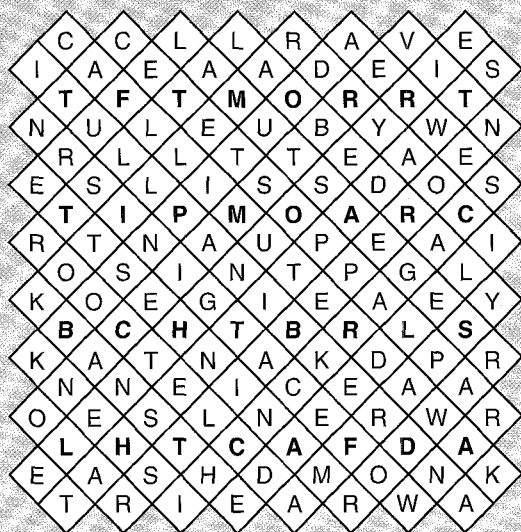
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have motives of their own. It was a rare instance in which the silver screen actually had something useful to say to the Fourth Estate.

I found myself thinking about *Absence of Malice* after seeing last year's *Shattered Glass*, which missed an opportunity to expose some recent troubling trends in the business. The film, based on a story written by Buzz Bissinger for *Vanity Fair* in 1998, is about a scandal at the eminent magazine *The New Republic*. It is a compelling little movie with terrific performances, but it sidesteps the more important issues involved and becomes, in the end, primarily a fascinating character study. It lets journalism off the hook way too easily.

In the film the magazine's editors (including my late friend and colleague Mike Kelly, who went on to edit *The Atlantic*) are hoodwinked and embarrassed by a likeable young reporter who, it turns out, is a compulsive liar. Stephen Glass, the reporter, is finally exposed and expelled. Honest journalism triumphs. If all you know about the scandal is what the movie tells you, then you can leave the theater assured that the traditional values of journalism are safe and sound, and that the case at hand involved nothing more than one very peculiar young man.

Glass was certainly a strenuous liar, and the fact-checking procedures then in place at his magazine (and at others for which he wrote) left much to be desired. But the real story isn't about—or shouldn't have been about—the duping of principled journalists by a pathological young reporter. Glass's run of faked features happened not just because he was clever and determined but because he was giving *The New Republic* and other magazines exactly what they wanted. His story is about the pitfalls of advocacy journalism and its close relative, journalistic celebrity, two of the profession's most dangerous modern trends.

Any editor who gets a story that is exactly what he expected ought to be immediately suspicious. Good journalism surprises us, because it tells us things we did not know. Since the world is infinitely complex and ever changing, honest reporting nearly always reveals something new and unexpected. An

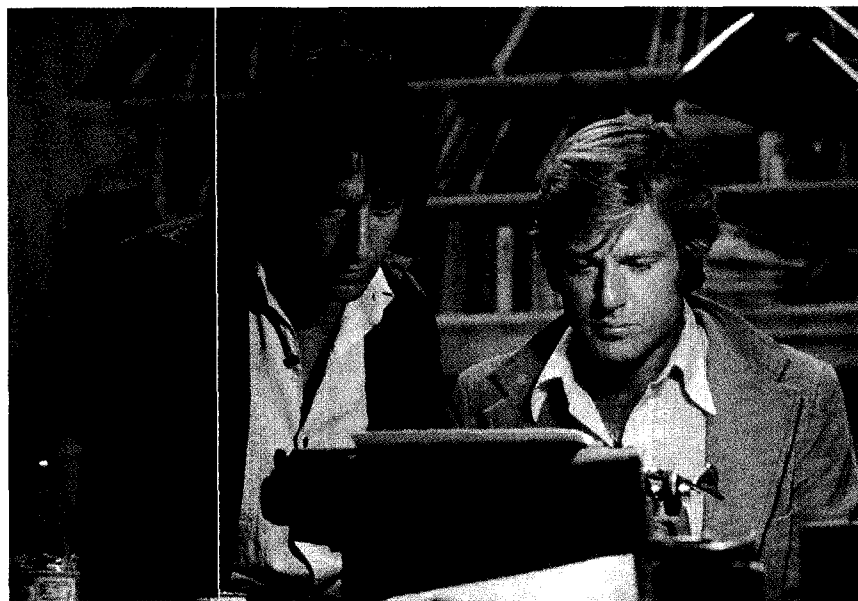
honest reporter looks for what is new, and honest minds are influenced—sometimes changed—by new information. When a reporter's starting point is an opinion or even a strongly held political philosophy, which it is in advocacy journalism, reporting can become an exercise in gathering ammunition. Glass diagnosed an appetite at *The New Republic* for stories that illustrated, preferably outrageously, the naiveté of traditional liberals and the moral corruption of conservatives. His stories fit perfectly the pugnacious neoconservatism *The New Republic* of that era was attempting to define. There has always been room in

movie that show Glass fantasizing about preening alongside his adoring old journalism teacher before a class at his old high school, the emphasis is not on great journalism but on becoming famous. The students are being asked not to admire Glass's work but to admire *him*. His goal is to become a star. Traditionally, even the reporters most celebrated within the profession were not widely known outside it. There have always been celebrity columnists and critics, but the general anonymity of the profession had a kind of nobility. The only way to become a star reporter was to play one on TV, by becoming a newscaster

their work. Once a reporter gets hot, as Glass did, editors who weren't the least bit interested in his work months or years before are suddenly vying to print anything with his name on it. At that point the process is no longer about the work but about the reporter. It reflects a more general societal narcissism, and the stories produced become less and less real journalism and more and more an effort to reaffirm existing biases and beliefs.

Which brings me back to *Absence of Malice*. Pollack's film opens with a now archaic sequence showing a big-city newspaper being pasted up on boards, set in metal plates, and printed on giant printing presses at a dizzying rate, thousands of copies per minute. It is an image of power, of the industrial muscle behind journalism, and it is also a classic screen image in the history of Hollywood. The power of the press is generally portrayed in movies as one of the great benefits of freedom, but in *Absence of Malice* it has darker implications. Later in the film, when the fragile, good-hearted Teresa Perrone's shattering personal secret has been splashed on page one, she trots barefoot through her neighborhood from lawn to lawn, early in the morning, picking up unopened newspapers. We are reminded of the great power of those presses, and feel the heartbreaking futility of Perrone's effort to somehow lift all those papers from a whole city of front lawns.

This film is rare in the canon of celluloid journalism. It shows how easily an overzealous prosecutor can use an ambitious reporter, and how much harm a well-meaning newspaper can do in its lofty pursuit of truth. Eager to reveal the latest wrinkle in a federal murder probe, the reporter Meg, played by Sally Field, prints information from a privileged government file—artfully leaked by Elliott Rosen, an obnoxious strike-force chief played by Bob Balaban. Rosen wants to pressure an innocent businessman (Newman) into cooperating with his investigation. I love the portrayal of the newsroom in that film, which was made when computers had been introduced but reporters still had typewriters on their desks, and the clatter of teletype machines never stopped.



Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford in *All the President's Men*

American journalism for argument, but any publication that identifies itself with a particular outlook makes its reporting automatically suspect. Since the era of "yellow journalism" the most respected American news organizations have been those without an overt agenda. Of course, even the most "objective" of these are accused of harboring biases, and no reporter is entirely free of those; but the most powerful reporting is in publications that strive to rise above them. Yet today more and more print, TV, and radio journalists do just the opposite: they advertise a bias.

I don't know enough about Glass to understand his personal motives, but the film suggests that chief among them was a desire for celebrity. In the increasingly painful scenes throughout the

—the "on-air talent"—who presented the reporting of others, usually hard-working, lower-paid producers behind the scenes. Today television is increasingly a destination point for everyone in the business, and so many cable channels are hungry for bodies to fill airtime that just about everybody gets a shot. We are approaching the time, if we haven't already reached it, when a reporter with a hot story can spend more time on TV talking about it than was spent reporting and writing it.

Nothing is wrong with journalists' promoting or explaining their work, and the republic will survive the current plague of talking heads; but serious journalists need to resist the lure of celebrity for its own sake, and the comfort of a clearly defined political starting point for

Accidental Discovery of Mysterious "Gold Rush" Coin Stuns Experts

World's Rarest U.S. \$20 Gold Proof Found: The San Francisco Mint 1854 Double Eagle Proof!

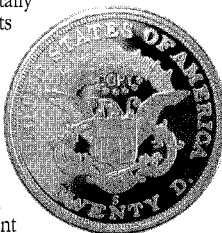
WASHINGTON, D.C.—A one-of-a-kind U.S. Treasury gold proof coin has been accidentally discovered within the vaults of the Smithsonian Institution. This 1854-S gold Double Eagle \$20 coin was struck by the San Francisco Mint in its first year of operation. The San Francisco Mint was born out of the need for a Western Frontier Mint when, in January of 1848, gold flakes were discovered at Sutter's Mill triggering one of the most important chapters in U.S. History—The California Gold Rush! To the surprise of historians, this single "S" mint Proof coin was individually struck from specially polished minting dies. How this unique Proof Double Eagle made its way across the continent and then into the hands of the Smithsonian Institution is an unsolved mystery to this day.

Today the First Federal Mint announces the public release of the first ever gold Proof commemorative honoring this rarest U.S. Government \$20 gold piece. This 10mil gold Proof has a frosted image against a deep mirror field, creating a breathtaking work of art in gold. This 150th anniversary Mint release honors the legacy of a true historic masterpiece.

The magnificent 10mil gold proof measures a full 39mm diameter to truly showcase the beauty and intricacy of this legendary coin design. The 10mil gold proof is available only through this limited edition, private release from the First Federal Mint at the advance issue price of \$19.95 each.

Fabulous Rarity Valued at \$12 Million

Only one original proof coin is known to have been struck. Even the foremost rare coin experts were unaware of its existence until it was accidentally found deep in the vaults of the museum. America's foremost authority on U.S. gold coins, David Akers, has written, "the 1854-S Double Eagle is easily the most significant and desirable branch mint proof coin in existence". With the recent auction sale of one of the three 1933 St. Gaudens Double Eagles for \$7.9 million, senior numismatist Nicholas Bruyer estimates the unique 1854-S Proof



Double Eagle would bring at least \$12 million if it ever becomes available at auction.

The "Gold Rush" Coin.

2004 marks the 150th anniversary of this historic mint striking. The First Federal Mint is releasing this mint quality 10mil gold Gem Proof collectors coin to honor the legend, lore and legacy of the 1854-S Double Eagle!

Special Discount for Advance Orders.

The issue price for the special 150th anniversary 1854-S Gold Proof commemorative coin has been set at \$50.00. However during the advance release period only, you may reserve your own 10mil 24k gold Gem Proof for only \$19.95.

Your 1854-S Double Eagle 150th Anniversary Gold Proof will be protected in a clear acrylic holder and mounted in a deluxe presentation case. A signed and numbered Certificate of Authenticity will attest to the specifications and Limited Edition status of this exclusive private mintage.

Your order must be placed during this advance issue period to qualify for the \$19.95 price. Multiple orders of five or more will be priced at \$17.95 per Gold Proof. You must be 100% satisfied with your order, or simply return it within 30 days by insured mail for a prompt refund of the purchase price.

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All prices are guaranteed during the advance order period, regardless of any increases in the price of gold. Order your 150th Anniversary Gold Proof Double Eagle today to ensure these prices before the advance order period is closed!

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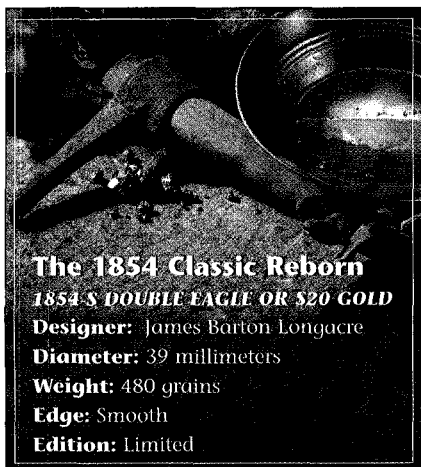


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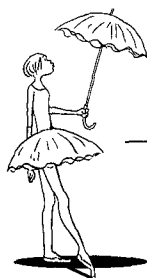


The 1854 Classic Reborn
1854-S DOUBLE EAGLE OR \$20 GOLD
Designer: James Barton Longacre
Diameter: 39 millimeters
Weight: 480 grains
Edge: Smooth
Edition: Limited

I recognized the way Meg's honest but cynical editor nudges her to gently juice her story, changing "suspect" to "key suspect." Being one step removed from the real people she is writing about, he soothes her occasional misgivings by invoking the toughness their profession demands: "I know how to print what's true, and I know how not to hurt people," he says. "I don't know how to do both at the same time." When Meg agonizes over the impact of revealing the very Catholic Teresa Perrone's deep secret, an abortion, her editor gives her a little homily about the man who saved President Gerald Ford from an assassination attempt. The man was gay, he tells her—a secret that found its way into news stories. "Now the whole country knows that too," the editor says. In other words, the great and noble spotlight of the news had been shined on him, and he had been hurt by it. So be it: the public's right to know, and all that; people get hurt. As long as it gets the story, and gets it right, the news serves a higher purpose. A good editor might just as easily have taken the opposite tack with a callous or arrogant reporter, but the exchanges between Meg and her editor in *Absence of Malice* have the ring of truth. This kind of thing can and does happen.

Shattered Glass might have been about the confusion between success and accomplishment. It might have been a cautionary tale about the pitfalls of advocacy journalism—about the confusion between searching for truth and merely marshaling facts for argument. Both journalists and filmmakers are in the business of telling stories, and reporters, perhaps for that reason, tend to love movies. So Hollywood has journalism's ear. It may be the one institution in our society powerful enough to influence the press. *Absence of Malice* got under journalism's skin, because it forced reporters to see themselves as something other than heroic—as potentially arrogant and dangerous. *Shattered Glass* had the same opportunity but missed. It might have delivered a blow to the barking narcissism of our age. Instead it delivers a big wet kiss at a time when the profession might profit from a kick in the ass. ■

Mark Bowden is a national correspondent for The Atlantic.



THE PUZZLER

by EMILY COX and HENRY RATHVON

Radio Daze

This puzzle's diagram entries have been supplied by a public-radio audience, with predictable results: Of the 40 clue answers, 11 are affected in one way and 15 more in another way. Both ways create new words in the grid. Letters that fall in the shaded squares, read left to right from top to bottom, explain what sort of a puzzle this is. There are two proper nouns among clue answers and two more among diagram entries.

Last month's Puzzler solution is on page 148.

ACROSS

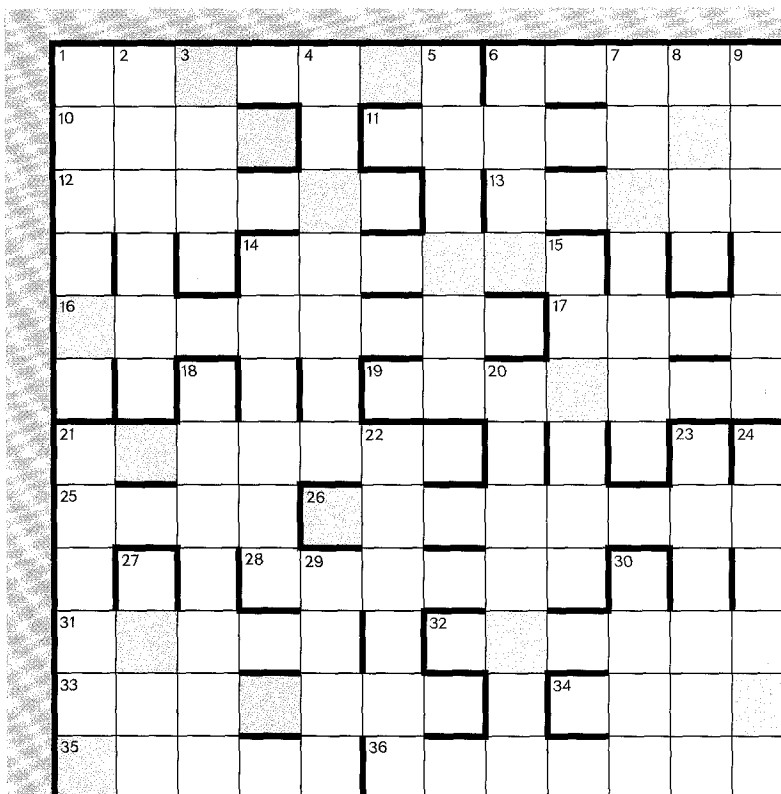
1. Hint is about Southern writer (1,1,5)
6. After school, declare what a packrat is (5)
10. Square-dance faction that is found among boys (6)
11. Baby's gas was corrosive (7)
12. One verse's hot points? (6)
13. Little guys and big guys evicting GI (4)
14. Vehicles carrying Brubeck's most unresponsive audience? (8)
16. Locating island in hoax (6)
17. Gym class includes a cool, organized walk (6)
19. Overwhelmed, got out of the sled? (7)
21. Peg joins groups with keyboards (7)
25. Stuck, changed course in a sailfish (6)
26. One leaving note in garden area (8)
28. Made smooth moves and edged inside (6)
31. Driving, pass a chime (7)
32. Bum agrees with kind of monkey? (6)
33. In emergency rooms, spot hams? (7)
34. Head of Apollo trimmed on both sides (4)
35. Crowded room's empty (5)
36. Felipe or Moises just passing in normal voices (5)

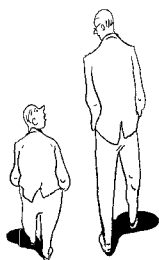
DOWN

1. Aggressive features of Conservative legislation (5)
2. Wrong family to be apprehended at last (4,2)
3. Lure field boss of the Mafia (4,2)
4. Cover "Stormy Weather" (7)
5. Song both seen and read mistakenly (8)
6. Inflamed passion the wrong way (4)
7. Benefit of a truck license in Delaware (9)
8. Name for a man's backside when given a shave? (4)
9. Grabbed nap, hugged by mate (7)
14. Fortune held by rich ancestors (6)
15. Made a froth of potato, coating me (6)

18. Piece of cake involved in extra bad habit (9)
20. Tortilla cooked by the seashore (8)
21. Theatrical name for all-male schooling? (6)
22. Mystical messages conveyed by distant radio (6)
23. Gold grain covers large ear on the outside (7)
24. Cryptic decree brings fall back (6)
27. Horrific writer swallows crazy hair tonic (6)
29. Reconstructed a Degas with saws (6)
30. Fermented stuff that hurts grassland (6)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving visit www.theatlantic.com/issues/puzzclue.htm or send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.





WORD FUGITIVES

by BARBARA WALLRAFF

In response to last October's requests for fugitive words, the usual array of clever neologisms arrived. And so did an unusual number of letters asserting that the words sought already exist. This time, as on some previous occasions, top honors go to authors of responses in the second category.

The first word sought was for "a situation in which you refuse to accept that the occurrence of two events is merely coincidental but there is no evidence to link them together." For this the neologisms included *fauxincidence*, *coincivince*, *coincidon't*, *duperstition*, and *wishful linking*.

Clement J. Colucci, of the Bronx, wrote, "The word *apophenia* was coined for that condition in 1958." *The Skeptic's Dictionary*, by Robert Todd Carroll, bears Colucci out ("*Apophenia* is the spontaneous perception of connections and meaningfulness of unrelated phenomena"). Standard dictionaries, however, do not list the word.

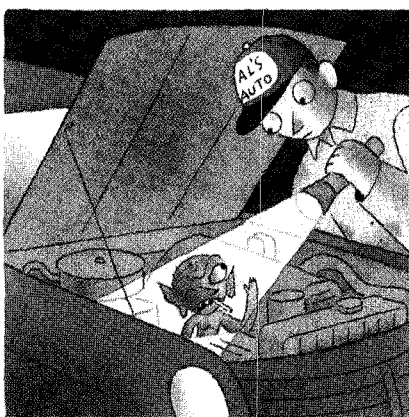
Tom Johnson, of Morris, Minnesota, reported, "The term *illusory correlation* has been used for many years in the behavioral sciences." And Jan Swearingen, of Bryan, Texas, wrote, "In more than one religious tradition the discipline of *discernment* is taught and encouraged through reflection, meditation, or prayer. *Discernment* is the ability to sense the deeper meaning of similarities, repetitions, and echoes among otherwise random and 'coincidental' events."

A number of readers offered *synchronicity*, explaining that the word originated with the psychologist Carl Jung. Robert Barth, of Salt Lake City, takes top honors for supplying a definitive reference. He wrote, "In his book *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, published in 1952, Carl Gustav Jung coined the word to describe such events and advanced the following definition: '*Synchronicity* ... consists of two factors: a) An unconscious image

comes into consciousness either directly (i.e., literally) or indirectly (symbolized or suggested) in the form of a dream, idea, or premonition. b) An objective situation coincides with this content. The one is as puzzling as the other.'" Indeed!

The second fugitive sought was for "the phenomenon wherein a mechanical or electronic device, having gone on the blink, resumes working perfectly while the repair person examines it." Among the neologisms submitted for this were *devious ex machina*, *deus hex machina*, *afixia*, *refixcidivism*, *rekaputulation*, *on the wink*, and *hocus operandi*.

Michael Deskey, of New York City,



sent along a photocopy of a chapter of the 1963 book *A Short History of Fingers and Other State Papers*, by H. Allen Smith, to establish that the phenomenon in question demonstrates the workings of *Fetridge's Law*. In 1936 an NBC radio engineer named Claude Fetridge attempted to broadcast, live, the flight of the swallows from Mission San Juan Capistrano, in California. Unfortunately, that year the swallows skipped out of San Juan Capistrano on October 22, a day earlier than tradition calls for, and a lot of personnel and equipment arrived just in time to record nothing in particular. How does this relate? In H. Allen Smith's words, "*Fetridge's Law*, in simple language, states that important things that are supposed to

happen do not happen, especially when people are looking or, conversely, things that are supposed to *not* happen do happen, especially when people are looking."

That's certainly the right general idea, but something more specific was wanted. Dirk Vanderloop, of Chico, California, wrote, "The condition described is all too familiar to me as a former automotive and aerospace technician. The official industrial term is *intermittent failure*." And Jeff Abbas, of Minneapolis, takes top honors. He wrote, "Inconsistent malfunctions in machinery are known as *gremlins*." Sure enough, *The American Heritage Dictionary* gives the definition "an imaginary gnome-like creature to whom mechanical problems, especially in aircraft, are attributed."

Now ARVIN V. REYES, of Quezon City, the Philippines, writes, "Like many urbanites, I stand in line many times during the day, such as when eating lunch in a fast-food outlet. When I stand in line, I always think that the line next to me is moving faster. That is what usually happens. Can you help me with a word to describe my thinking?"

And ALLISON A. JOHNSON, of Glendale, California, writes, "I'm looking for a term that describes the momentary confusion experienced by everyone in the vicinity when a cell phone rings and no one is sure if it is his/hers or not."

Send words that meet Arvin Reyes's or Allison Johnson's needs to *Word Fugitives*, The Atlantic Monthly, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114, or visit the *Word Fugitives* page on our Web site, at www.theatlantic.com/fugitives. Submissions must be received by March 31. Use the same addresses to submit word fugitives that you'd like The Atlantic's help in finding. Letters become the property of *Word Fugitives* and may be edited.

Readers whose queries are published and those whose words are singled out for top honors will each receive, with our thanks, a selection of recent autographed books by Atlantic authors. The next installment's correspondents will be sent *Mediterranean Winter*, by Robert D. Kaplan; *Faith: Stories*, edited by C. Michael Curtis; and *The Early Stories: 1953-1975*, by John Updike.

GREG CLARKE



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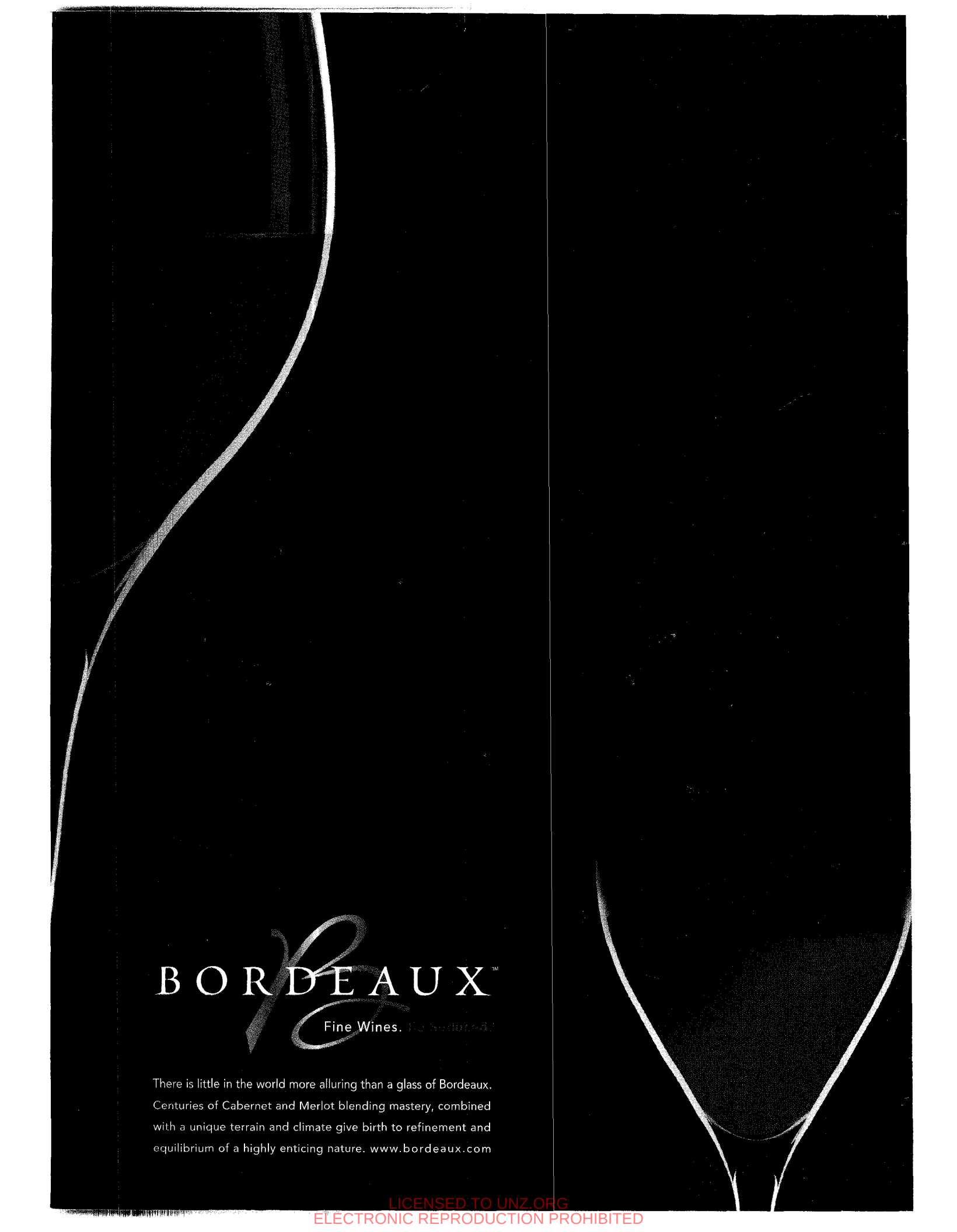
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